AN IDLER IN THE NEAR EAST

F. G. AFLALO

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Frontispiece.]

THE SEA OF GALILEE, WITH TIBERIAS.

Even apart from its sacred associations, there is a serene beauty about this wonderful lake, which makes it the most memorable scene in the Holy Land, and the attractiveness of its surroundings contrasts strangely with the desolation of the Dead Sea. Tiberias, however, is fallen from its high estate in Herod's time, and little remains in memory of its Roman builders beyond the ruins of the fortress, seen in the foreground of the photograph.

[*Frontispiece.*

AN IDLER IN THE NEAR EAST

BY

F. G. AFLALO

"Observation is the most enduring of the Pleasures of Life"

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

JOHN MILNE
29 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN
LONDON
1910

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

[*In Preparation*

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

THE REGILDING OF THE CRESCENT

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT CONDITION AND A GLIMPSE AT THE FUTURE OF THE OTTOMAN NATION

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

PREFACE

THERE was once a famous German art critic who never went to see "Mr. Gonstable's" pictures without taking his umbrella, and I was constantly reminded of his foresight by letters which reached me from England during my stay in Turkey. Those who cherish disagreeable memories of the last English summer will realise the impression produced by these reports of its behaviour on one who, between the middle of March, when, after three months of snow in its streets, he left Stamboul for Palestine, and the middle of August, when he once again looked on the cliffs of Kent enjoying their morning bath, had seen just five showers, the worst of which lasted for three hours. Quest of a climate necessarily exercises those whose otherwise glorious heritage is Britain. The winter in Constantinople is severe, with weeks of snowbound streets and liquid mud; but its spring and summer are successive steps towards the conditions of Paradise.

PREFACE

The spell of the Near East is dual: on the one hand, *kief* and the *nargileh*; on the other, the maelstrom of politics, with more robust fare, in the shape of bazaar riots and street hangings, than the curious may look for at home. Whether, like Washington Irving in the stage-coach, Turkey has lately changed her position only to be bruised in another place, has yet to be seen, but of the interest of her transition period there can be no question. This aspect of the country, however, will be the theme of a companion volume. The present one is concerned only with the lighter moments of my residence in the Sultan's dominions.

It was pleasant, after two summers of strenuous idling in the New World, with no political interludes, no historic glamour of more than mushroom foundations, no intercourse with ancient and fanatical races, to vary the delights of sport and the charms of scenery, to go back, as it were, to the beginnings of things, to lead the modern life in the cradle of the race, bathing in the Dead Sea, fishing in the Jordan, riding in the plains of Jericho, buying in the bazaars of Tiflis and Damascus, living away from civilisation on the Gulf of Ismidt at the time of the haymaking, and the gathering of cherries in such orchards as Europe knows not.

PREFACE

Perhaps the one abiding memory of the Levant, apart from its wonderful climate, is the curse of Babel. In the crowded alleys of Tiflis I was told that I had heard seventy different languages, and when taking leave of Turkish soil, on the quays of Salonika, I actually heard yet another tongue that is not spoken farther east, the Spanish-Hebrew of the watermen of that busy port. He who would enjoy a long stay in the country should be something of a linguist. I was constantly obliged to make use of such French, German, and Italian as are at my unready command, and, after eight weeks in the company of a Levantine Greek fisherman, I also picked up a smattering of such Hellene music as would have been Arabic to Homer. English, alone among civilised tongues, is little used in that country. When a native does attempt its intricacies, the result would wring a smile from even the President of the Divorce Court. I recollect a Greek in the employ of the "Bagdad Railway," a man who had once been assistant pew-opener at the English church at Moda, singing the opening lines of the National Anthem in a style that would have made our gracious King turn Nationalist. Discussing the diversity of religious creeds with me on one occasion, he suddenly posed the following

simple question: "Sir, Meester, are you Anglicanism?"

I am under a heavy debt of gratitude to Messrs. Edwin and Kenrick Whittall, who not only took infinite trouble in showing me the best fishing-grounds, but have done an even more self-denying act in most kindly reading the proofs of this book, which, while in no way committing them to responsibility for the opinions expressed in it, may be taken as a guarantee that there are no startling errors of fact.

For most of the photographs that I did not take myself I have to thank Messrs. Sébah and Joaillier of Pera, who took great pains in procuring difficult subjects for my purpose; a few are by M. Bonfils (Beyrouth) and M. Yermakoff (Tiflis), and one by Mr. Reynolds (Jerusalem).

There is one other word I wish to say with reference to the contents of this book. I am sometimes asked whether the Turkish women come up to the sample of Byron's *Haidée*, whose

> "Overpowering presence made you feel
> It would not be idolatry to kneel,"

and also whether they indulge in flirtations with Europeans. These questions have been posed by men of sense and by men of none. Let me at once confess that no directions for this kind of

sport will be found in these pages. Of the beauty of Turkish ladies I cannot speak, knowing only the pattern of their veils. Of their attitude towards adventure with men of other race than their own I am equally ignorant, since essays in that direction are discouraged in a land where a man's womenfolk are not his neighbour's. Why it should be essential, whenever a man returns from the East, to assume such Arabian Nights *amours* as part and parcel of his wanderings, I have never been able to understand; but as they appear to provide the material for such foolish fantasies as those inscribed in Loti's *Désenchantées*, I prefer, at the outset, to disown all knowledge of such successes as would seem to have befallen that gallant romancer during his command of the French *stationnaire* at Therapia.

Indeed, I have no thrilling experiences to relate. I was neither killed nor even arrested, and those in quest of sensation will lay down this peaceful record of impressions with the complaint that it makes much ado about nothing. Another question, by the way, that I have been asked times and again is, whether it is necessary to go armed in the Near East? My reply has invariably been: Always carry a six-shooter if you can trust yourself never to use it! The man whose hand closes on a pocket pistol the moment he is within

a hundred yards of trouble, had far better leave it at home. For years I have carried a revolver in different parts of the world, but it was never yet pointed at anything more dangerous than a bottle.

The mild adventures which befell me in the Near East meant the sacrifice of a "season" and of test matches. Some there are who will think such pleasures of travel dearly bought at the price. I can only give them my assurance that, when read a week late and a thousand miles from home, the defeats which England sustained at the athletic hands of Australians, Americans, Belgians, and others who lowered her colours, dwindle wonderfully, and when we are east of the Dardanelles the making of history counts for more than the making of runs. With which heretical confession, I gladly weave another humble bloom into the growing garland of amaranthine memories.

F. G. A.

DEVONSHIRE, *Easter* 1910.

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CHAPTER I

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In an age that honours the automobile and the *wagon-lit*, in which men of taste may make a bee-line for their goal and cross a continent behind drawn blinds, the comfortless creed of

the up-to-date traveller may be summed up in the words hurry, worry, and the line of least resistance. Were he a King's Messenger, he could not more warmly resent the slightest delay, and the bare suggestion of a side-track on horseback where the railroad does not run leaves him cold. For hustlers of this sort, the only conceivable link between Charing Cross and Constantinople is the "Orient Express." Well, I wish them joy of it. If they elect to order their lives on the lines of a wireless message, which rushes round the earth and sees nothing by the way, it is no affair of mine. Personally, even had I not more minutes to spare than money, it would never have occurred to me, particularly after two breathless excursions to the home of hustle, to go East, for the first time in fourteen years, otherwise than by the trackless highway of the Mediterranean.

The scenery between the Strand and the Cannebière was an old friend. With time in hand before my steamer was due to leave Marseilles, I made one short halt at Dijon and another at Avignon. At the Burgundian capital I fared well at the Hotel de la Cloche, now looking mournfully on winter snows, but at happier seasons a favourite halfway house for motorists on the way to Switzerland. There is

little to see in Dijon beyond the cathedral and an older church, as well as a small museum, which is not kept in model fashion. All this, however, as well as the enduring glamour of the City of the Popes, with the church where first the scrupulous Petrarch gazed wistfully upon the unwilling mistress of his heart, is fully set down in two hundred and ten guidebooks, and need not detain me here. The windy streets of Avignon, with their mules and dogs and sturdy peasants, have tempted me to miss a train before, and will doubtless do so again, for there is a nameless fascination about this corner of Spain adrift on the northern slopes of the Pyrenees, and the view, from the Palace of the Popes, of the river brawling through the broken arches of the bridge, is one that memory treasures above others of greater notoriety.

Marseilles, with the rays of the dying sun feebly gilding the Château d'If on a winter afternoon, recalls the beloved romance of salad days. In a more worldly retrospect the city conjures up savoury memories of a *bouillabaisse* at Isnard's, in the Rue des Recollettes, or of afternoon tea, than which none better is served in all France, at Linder's, half-way up a little street on the other side of the Cannebière. These modest attractions notwithstanding, Marseilles is, believe me,

no Mecca for epicures. The natives, simple souls, proudly regard the garlic-flavoured dishes of the *pays* as the last word in a refined cuisine; but, beyond the *bouillabaisse*, a savoury hotch-potch of fish and lobster, stewed with saffron, local art offers few compounds that would not make the self-respecting palate shrink. As a matter of fact, though I doubt whether Isnard will thank me for saying so, the Café des Phocéens does something much more dainty than the national mess, and that is a *châteaubriand*. It may be eaten in fourteen different styles, and, best of all, plain. Where, in a land of lean and muscular beeves, he finds such meat as melts in a grateful mouth, Isnard only knows, but it might tempt a vegetarian to his fall.

I had retained a cabin for Constantinople on the *Bosphore*, not, I imagine, a vessel of which the Directors of the *Messageries Maritimes* say much in polite circles, seeing that they have the *Armand Béhic* and other luxurious leviathans to conjure with, yet, of all the many cargo tramps that have taken me as freight, one of the most comfortable, and yielding only in this respect to another of the same line. The week's run to the Golden Horn was an agreeable surprise, for the Mediterranean, which is much given to naughtiness in January, behaved like a veritable lake.

One morning, at daybreak, the Commandant invited me to go on the bridge that I might gaze on what, only a fortnight earlier, had been two smiling cities, now only a wretched heap of leaning steeples and roofless houses. Reggio and Messina offered a sickening picture of the destruction which can be effected by sixty seconds of upheaval when the earth chooses to forget its solid dignity and to behave like a raging sea. Nor was the sadness of such a sight softened by the certainty that the homeless creatures, whom we saw wandering aimlessly on the beach and seeking they knew not what, would, with the least encouragement from without, set about restoring their shattered homes to make further sport for the gods. We stood in so close, indeed, that, as the day grew brighter, two French professors, who were proceeding to occupy chairs in a university at Teheran, were tempted, with I know not what results, to take some cinematograph views of this doleful panorama.

Next evening, on the Orthodox New Year's Eve, the *Bosphore* anchored for some hours off Calamatta, my first introduction to the sacred soil of Greece. I could have wished a better impression than that furnished by the frowsy natives, the drunken fellows in short petticoats, the wailing of pipes and beating of drums, with

which the Hellenes were ushering in another troubled year. Nor was Athens any more restful next day, for it also was abandoned to the holiday mood, in which the modern Athenians are little more reminiscent of the Immortals than an Easter Monday crowd in possession of Hampstead Heath. Yet there is that about the Akropolis, about the stern-faced Caryatides and majestic Parthenon, which makes a man uncover. There is that, too, which pleasantly recalls those careless schoolboy days in which many a sunny half-holiday was rebelliously employed in the writing of Greek lines suggestive of just such scenes as this. The way up to this sacred hill-top is steep, but it is worth the climb, and I would advise, at any rate for the able-bodied, every step of it on foot. You are treading holy ground and should scorn the aid of modern cabs. Nor are dead memories the only attraction of this city of the past. The lover of animals may pay a visit, which he will not regret, to a small but model Zoological Garden at Phalerum, a seaside suburb of the capital, easily reached by tram from the next station to Piræus, where the steamers lie. The animals of this establishment are few in number and of no rarity, but their condition is amazingly different from that of the wretched prisoners in some menageries elsewhere. This

creditable result is, no doubt, in great measure due to a happy combination of soil and climate, and as the majority of them are of African origin, they may almost be said to be breathing their native air. Absence of crowds may also ensure that these happy animals shall be neither teased nor overfed. There is no beauty about the site. Even were it not obviously the newest of the new, there is little scope for landscape gardening in any flat and treeless space beside the sea. Yet its lion, zebra, and giraffe, its mighty boar and its plumed ostriches were, at the time of my two visits, the finest specimens, without exception, that I ever saw in captivity.

As the steamer drops anchor in the spacious harbour of Smyrna, the traveller's nostrils are filled with the smell of the East. The camels and spices and covered bazaars make him feel that he is nearer to the sunrise than Suez. Smyrna owes much to its English colony. It is an orderly and well-conducted port, and its quays are the finest in all the Levant. Yet its beauty is but skin-deep. The back slums are nearly as bad as those of Liverpool. Like some other cities of the Orient, there is here the strangest medley of east and west. Half the varied produce of Anatolia comes on the backs of camels to the foreign holds that yawn beside the quays for

figs or olive oil. The shriek of the locomotive and the creaking of trams mingle with the call of the *muezzin*. I went one Friday to the mosque of the Howling Dervishes, who work themselves into a frenzy bordering on madness. The eastern temperament sets great store by this morbid condition of spiritual exaltation, but to the eye accustomed to calmer modes of worship it is not a pleasant sight.

The voyage now draws swiftly to its close. The only other port of call is the village of Dardanelles, which, having the smells of Smyrna, without its quays, is about as attractive as the village of Tilbury.

It is at daybreak on the Sunday that the traveller holds his breath at the first sight of sunrise over the minarets of Stamboul and the white marble of palaces mirrored in the Bosphorus. In swinging into the Golden Horn the steamer must slightly overshoot the mark so as to allow for the swift current, and here is perhaps the most perfect ending of a voyage in all the panorama of sea-travel. This first doubling of Seraglio Point is the memory of a lifetime. Lamartine and Loti failed to give it words, and who then shall succeed in doing justice to this amazing dream of cupolas that crown the hills of two continents and loom

ghostly in the misty veil of spun gossamer which veils the face of the waking city!

When, an hour later, the city does unveil to the stranger, the effect, it must be confessed, is disappointing. He sees then that this eastern Queen, enthroned on a site which hints at Paradise, has a dirty face. Where, he asks on closer acquaintance, are the dazzling colour, the dreamy music of the Orient, the soothing balm of musk, the thousand and one delights to captivate the senses, which that first wonderful glimpse from the incoming boat promised as the crowning of his pilgrimage? The Levantine crowd that surges on the quay sings no dreamy music and does not smell of myrrh. It is a dirty, out-at-elbows, thievish, murderous crowd, a crowd of howling tatterdemalions bent on plunder and exulting in its new-won liberty, an omelet of poisonous ingredients stirred by the arrival of the steamer. There are few Turks in that rabble. Not everyone in the Levant who wears a *fez* is a Mohammedan, and, but for a few Kurdish porters, or *hamals*, and the shouting Laze watermen, or *mahonajis*, this seething humanity is Levantine, otherwise Greek, Maltese, Italian, anything and everything un-Turkish, though born in the land, Ottoman subjects perforce, yet claiming, along with the fullest

liberty accorded under the sacred Constitution, all manner of extra-Turkish privileges of which they stood in need in the days when Hamid was Sultan in more than name. Excess of liberty may be agreeable to such a mob, but the reverse to the stranger, and there are sad moments of doubt in which a peaceful man, groping wearily after the lesser of two evils, may well sigh for the bad old times in which these noisome sons of freedom were kept in their proper place. It is futile nowadays, whether you are in Constantinople or Chelsea, to object to Jack being as good as his master, but when he begins to count himself a good deal better, then there is some difficulty in repressing a passing regret for the foot-on-the-neck policy which modern Turkey has renounced. It is the most outright democratic land on earth, not with the make-believe democracy of America, but with the true realisation of an equality in which neither gold nor lineage talk. The shoeblack pauses in his task to discuss politics with the pacha. What Browning, with that refined simplicity of his, calls the "pale spectrum of the salt," can never obtrude itself at the Turkish table. The Padishah is first; everyone else is last. There is no reason why a muleteer should not become Grand Vizier. For the matter of that, was not

the Prophet a camel-driver? On all sides are the evidences of this spirit of democracy. At an hotel in Syria, I was waited on at table by a first cousin and namesake of the Melhamés, a family at one time all-powerful at Yildiz, though fallen into disgrace along with their royal master, and long since exiled from the country.

There is more than one Constantinople. Like Plymouth, the capital of Turkey is divided into Three Towns. The English equivalent of its official title would be "Gate of Happiness and the Three Towns." The "Gate" is Stamboul. The Three Towns are Scutari, where all good Mohammedans of the neighbourhood hope to be buried (but are in no hurry about it), Pera, with Galata, and Eyub. Scutari is in Asia; the rest in Europe. Stamboul is the quarter of the city in which are to be found the official buildings, the bazaars, and the finest mosques. Pera belongs to the embassies and those who live under the ægis of Cook. Galata is the headquarters of many business firms, and the home of the Levantine riffraff. Eyub, a quiet suburb on the Golden Horn, has a mosque, which unbelievers may not enter, where the convivial Tchelebi of Konia girded Sultan Mehmet with the sword of Osman.

What, the reader asks, is there to see in and

about the city? So little that an enterprising American should do it in a couple of days. So much, that a stay of half a year scarcely lifts the edge of the veil from much that is incomprehensible, and he whose boast is not to rush over the globe like a cloud-burst will in that period gather only a few, though lasting, impressions. He may not, in all that time, have visited the Treasury or the Museum—the Englishman who knows more about the country than any other I ever met never attended a Selamlik—but he has listened to the women chattering beside a well from which a blindfolded ass draws water; he has mingled often with the patchwork crowd on the most wonderful bridge in Europe; he has watched the pilgrims from the Holy Places emerge like ragged bats after a night's shelter in the mosques; he has drunk coffee with Circassian horse-thieves and *raki* with Armenian fishermen; he has smoked cigarettes with Albanian shepherds and talked politics with members of the "Committee." He has looked on while Greeks and Turks fight in dark alleys. He knows the dogs of his quarter and is known to them. He is not unfamiliar with the Vizier's private room at the Porte. Admirable as such friends are to those who seek their counsel, he does not fly from pillar to post at the bidding

of Baedeker, and is deaf to the mandates of Murray. Yet he returns to his own with a more convincing impression of this many-coloured Babel than if he had never so diligently done the mosques and ruins.

This is no guidebook, and the lions of the city may roar their loudest without me for showman. Yet there be a few old landmarks too hallowed to pass over, and of these are the Land Walls. So far from the madding crowd are these crumbling ramparts, that I have tramped the whole length of them, from the Marmora to the Golden Horn, from Yedi Kule to Eyub, without seeing fifty people. Outcast dogs bask amid the ruins in company with daws and magpies, but of humanity there is little beyond a footsore seller of *simits* (rings of bread), a lad driving a donkey overburdened with charcoal, and a few hags who do not even take the trouble to veil their wrinkled faces. The one interlude of life on all this pleasant walk is the Gipsy Camp beside the Adrianople Gate, with its inevitable camp-following of scolding viragoes and yelping curs, stolen fowls, and ragged children already apprenticed to the honourable trade of whining for alms. There is a tradition that lovely maidens dwell in this settlement, and gallantry forbids me to say more on the subject.

What wonderful traditions pervade these decaying walls! What story of Byzantine decadence and of fierce Moslems carrying the Crescent ruthlessly into the shrines of Christendom! At the little Greek Church of Balukli (*i.e.* of the Fish), only a few steps off the high road that runs beside the walls, the custodian proudly shows to this day a basin in which still swims one of the fishes that, on the day when Byzantium fell, jumped out of the frying pan into the fire, by way of convincing the old monk who refused to believe the fatal news without such a sign. For nearly five centuries this hardy relic has preserved the mottled appearance of a half-cooked fish. The other two, alas, are dead, and occupy a place of honour on an ikon over the holy well. How long the third may survive, who knows? And who would dream of throwing doubt on a story that gives joy to thousands? Why, if they please, should they not believe that it has lived since that terrible day in May when the Conqueror and his Janissaries came surging through the breach? Needless to say, these ancient walls have been the theme of many enthusiasts. I heard much about them from Professor Van Millingen as we sat at his window, which overlooks the Bosphorus at Bebek, but the archæological aspect of the subject leaves me unmoved.

Another haunt of mine was the little Crimean Graveyard on the Asiatic shore. More reverend than the splendid cemetery outside New Orleans was this retiring little patch of God's Acre that safeguards the mortal remains of brave men and women who died that Turkey might be free. Soldiers, sailors, nurses, they lie here in their thousands, and over their honoured graves each spring—lest their spirits should haunt the scene of their exile with the passionate longing

"Oh, to be in England now that April's there!"

—English daisies bud anew and English trees break into leaf. Of all the inscriptions that keep alive the memory of these heroes and heroines, none, as I think, is more pathetic than that carved on the tombstone of one of Florence Nightingale's devoted band:

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD."

God knows what sad story of failure or success is crowded in this simple tribute!

Here they lie, these victims of the war that drove the Bear back on his snows and freed the father of Abd-ul-Hamid from the paws that hug. When first I visited the graveyard, he was still on the throne, and I looked down with mingled feelings on the great building of the Bagdad

Railway at Haidar Pacha, a concession made less out of love for Potsdam than hatred of St. James's. In such generous measure do some princes pay their father's debts. It was not unpleasing to stand there once again some months later, when the grass was dried by August suns, yet lovingly tended through all the changing seasons, and to muse on Hamid captive at Salonika, unregretted, dishonoured, no better than the meanest of his brother's subjects. Was it for nothing that these brave men and braver women left their island home to die in the East? Death for one's country may be sweet and proper, but what was Hecuba to them, or they to Hecuba?

Yes; it was something, though vengeful thoughts are out of place amid such surroundings, that Hamid had exchanged Yildiz Kiosk for the Villa Allatini. Having seen them both, I do not envy him the change. Not that Yildiz is particularly impressive. What its kiosks and gardens may have been like in the heyday of the royal occupation, when the old tyrant hedged his sacred person about with those walking arsenals of his, the Albanians, and with all the other symbols of Oriental pomp, I cannot say, since I knew but its outer walls. In August, however, when the grounds were thrown open to a curious

public, I paid the interior a reluctant visit and found the result, with its vulgar little side-shows of boats on toy lakes, ridiculous museums, and what not, much the same as an Earl's Court exhibition, where the sightseer is mulcted in "extras" at every turn.

The Friday Selamlik was, under the old *régime*, a feast for trippers, and provided, for the matter of that, a picturesque parade of all arms while the Sovereign attended service within the little Hamidieh Mosque. The Selamliks of the old days are no more. With Turkey ruled by the people for the people, the Sultan is but a figurehead. Those with some knowledge of the Oriental temperament predict, not without good reason, that, after an overdose of Hamid, this subordination of the Padishah is being carried to the other extreme, and we may yet look for moderate reaction towards greater respect for the Sultan's prestige. Yet, so long at any rate as the present epoch of retrenchment lasts, it is unlikely that the old pageant of the Selamlik will be revived. They made a brave sight, those five or six thousand troops: the lancers on their white chargers, the fierce, green-turbaned Arabs from African Tripoli, spruce marines from the fleet, swaggering Albanians bristling with fire-arms and dirks, all massed between the courtyard

of the little mosque and the Palace gates. For an hour before noon there would be much coming and going of pachas ablaze with orders, of led horses and galloping orderlies, of eunuchs and *hojas*, of tourists, distinguished or otherwise, and conducted accordingly to an upstairs window or herded like sheep, their inevitable cameras taken from them during the ceremony, in a railed enclosure overlooking the route. Here they had to toe the line in single file, and were not allowed to press too close to the barrier.

As the hands of the clock in front of the Mosque point to the hour of the midday prayer, a shrill cry from the blue takes all eyes to the minaret, where a robed figure, nearer Heaven than the bellringers of western churches, invites the Faithful to prayer. Presently this privileged person will bid Hamid not to be too exalted, since there is One who is greater than even he. It is said that on one occasion a very great Personage, witnessing the ceremony for the first time, was seen, when the words were translated into German for his benefit, to give a deprecatory upward twist to his moustaches; but what truth there may be in the story I know not.

And now there is a stir at the Palace gates, from which emerges a procession of closed carriages, drawn by superb horses and containing

the women of the harem and sundry young princes. Beside these, tall black eunuchs, in frock coat and *fez*, shamble with the peculiar gait of their caste. Then when these have vanished into the courtyard, there is the clatter of arms coming to the salute, a deafening cry of *Padishah chok yacha*! (Long live our Sovereign!), and here comes the only open carriage, with the huddled object of all this ceremonial, the pale-faced autocrat who for thirty years and more kept his people in a bondage unparalleled since the Dark Ages. Opposite him sits the Grand Vizier. I saw but two Selamliks, each historic in its way. At my first, which was on a brilliant day in February, the Sultan's *vis-à-vis* in the royal carriage was the aged Kiamil Pacha, who that very day was arraigned before Parliament, and, failing to put in an appearance on the next, fell from power never to return to the high office he had filled so often and so ably. My last Selamlik was even more memorable, for it was also Hamid's. That was on the 23rd April, the day before the "Army of Salonika" fired its guns on the barracks. There were to have been great doings on this occasion. It was freely rumoured that a devoted band of desperate officers, weary of moderate counsels, had disguised themselves as civilians and were to assassinate the tyrant in

presence of the army. Even the embassies, as eager for such mares' nests as schoolboys for those of hedge-sparrows, warned their subjects not to be present. Needless to say, nothing happened, though these silly stories had a depressing effect on the enclosure, which was all but empty. On such occasions the favourite son usually returned from the Mosque in his father's carriage and sat beside the Vizier, and at the first I saw the famous Prince Burhaneddin, the cub in whose favour the "Lion" of Yildiz had hoped, with the help of another monarch, to alter the succession. Alas! the schemes of mice and men gang aft a-gley, even in royal families, and Burhaneddin is now interned in one of the city palaces, forbidden access to his exiled father, the "Committee" having wisely decided that two such heads may be even worse than one!

The hundred-and-one types of which the daily crowd of Constantinople is composed may all be inspected in the main street of Galata or on the famous Bridge. The main street of Galata, crowded by day, is, as seen at night, a human sewer, and some of the rats can bite. Not even Port Said, as I knew it many years ago, could have compared with this sink. Port Said, as I revisited it last spring, was more genteel than even Bayswater. Those who seek inspiration

from modern Greek fauns and satires the worse for *mastic* (a distillation from rice, flavoured with the gum of that name), should find it by plunging any fine night into the *bas fonds* of Galata. Let me counsel him to leave at his hotel his watch and the whole of his money, except a few shillings in very small change. Then, if such be his queer taste, let him take a reliable guide from the Pera Palace and go down for an hour or two into this globigerine ooze of humanity. He will not in any case emerge any the cleaner. If he goes without a guide, he will possibly not emerge at all. Yet, from an academic standpoint, he will gain a clearer notion of the "Greeks," noble fellows, over whom, so far as he is permitted by the Patriarch, the Sultan rules. The least vile memories of such submergence in the dregs of Levantine life are the coffee and the music. The coffee, which must be made by an Arab, not by a Greek, has a bouquet that is very welcome in all that reek. The wild Arab music, played in the minor key on primitive string instruments, goes to the heart more surely than many a much-practised variation in the hands of some long-haired virtuoso at the Queen's Hall. Allah only knows who composed it. Probably it was never on paper, but is improvised. It bears no resemblance whatever to the alleged Oriental

style of the Hamidieh March order, the composer of which achieved in weaker measure for the autocrat of Yildiz that which, with a fuller success, the writer of *Aïda* contrived for the Khedive of Egypt. The Hamidieh March was a great success in Constantinople during the latter part of Hamid's reign, though nowadays one would be as likely to hear the "Washington Post." It assumed all the importance of music-hall lyrics at election time. It was played on hand-organs and whistled by street arabs. The very dogs of the city seemed to bark in time with its lively measure. Hamid himself preferred it above all other music in the world. Not for its melody, for he inherited from his mother an ear for music (and could even, with one hand, play the Soldiers' Chorus from *Faust*), and, with the possible exception of one short movement, this march of his was music only for the deaf. No; he favoured it for its words. A rough translation of two of the lines may perhaps explain his modest tastes:

> "Oh, universal benefactor, king of kings,
> The land prospers under your imperial auspices!"

The simple, straightforward truth of this stirring apostrophe must at once be apparent to anyone familiar with the history of Turkey since 1876.

Well, the land no longer prospers under his imperial auspices, and Constantinople and I heard the Hamidieh March played for the last time by the regimental bands at the Selamlik of 23rd April 1909. An amusing story is told of this march, which is just worth giving here. The ex-Sultan had a fine taste in the drama. He built him a private theatre at Yildiz, and a command performance could usually be counted on by travelling comedy companies who kept clear of all reference to the foibles of kings, particularly if the troupe included a lady or two of personal charm and a not too pronounced indifference to imperial admiration. On the occasion of one of these visits, when the Yildiz Theatre was filled with courtiers and guests from the diplomatic body, the conductor, one Dussap Pacha, was asked by the chief actor to play a lively march. Full of loyalty for its beloved sovereign, the orchestra struck up the Hamidieh. It knew no other. Nor could it know that the third bar was the signal for a lively donkey, dressed as a dude, to prance across the stage on its hind legs! The effect was very funny to all who were present, with two exceptions. The Sultan flew into a towering rage, and had the curtain rung down. The unhappy *chef-d'orchestre* was forbidden ever again

to show his face at Yildiz, and doubtless thanked his stars that he had escaped without a bath in the Bosphorus!

Among other diverting entertainments provided for those of morbid curiosity who ransack the lowest depths of midnight Galata are the *haschisch* dens, in which the ape-like element of Levantine humanity seeks oblivion with the potent aid of that beastly drug. When I was a good many years younger, I had paid nocturnal visits, in the edifying company of a detective, to the Chinese opium dens of Australian cities, and had looked on the Yellow Man in a state of happy collapse, staring into nothingness through glazed eyes that could only have been windows to the soul of a hog. The same uplifting spectacle may be seen any night in Galata. The *haschisch* is mostly taken in a kind of caramel, and its effect on the patient varies according to his health and the strength of the dose. Once—I confess this without either shame or pride, for it was in the days when youth excuses much that later would be unpardonable—I tried, while travelling in Morocco, to smoke a couple of pipes of *kief*, made from hempseed, which was to have shown me a dream of houris. I was more anxious to see houris in those days than I am now, but all I got from the experiment

was several hours of extreme nausea, with a distaste for food of any sort. The hardened eater of *haschisch* goes a good deal farther on the road to ruin than this. He runs round and round the den on his hands and feet, howling like a hyena. He weeps bitterly because he feels his nose growing longer than his limbs. He goes sheer down into the mire, and a strange feature of this bestial indulgence (as I have been assured by one who often yielded to it) is that his more rational self is all the while perfectly conscious of what he is doing. Jekyll looks dispassionately on at Hyde's fall from grace. Upon my soul—I write this in full remembrance of my midnight forays at Sydney fifteen years ago — I have more respect for the man who boldly takes the drug and pays the price, than for those who can find pleasure in remaining sober and contemplating their fellow-creatures steeped in such filth. Decadents who can find enjoyment in such spectacles are barely a remove above the objects of their contempt.

A genuine Turkish theatre will not afford recreation to anyone with a soul above buffoonery and third-class cinematograph displays. The visitor will find one or two playhouses in Pera, and here travelling companies from Vienna and elsewhere offer a wide range of entertainment,

from melodrama to musical comedy. On one occasion, I remember, a Viennese company gave *The Merry Widow*, a performance which evoked a cheerful demonstration from some Montenegrins in the gallery, who, choosing to see in the piece an Austrian slight on a royal prince of their race, rained chairs and sticks on the fortunate occupants of the stage and stalls, and in no time created a stampede. The true native theatres, however, lie over the bridge, in Stamboul, and may well be left there without a passing regret. I paid a single visit to one of them, in company with some dragomans from the Consulate. It sufficed. As a box for four cost only two dollars, we ought not perhaps to have expected much. We did not. We were promised a view of Circassian dancing girls, and that would have met our requirements. What we did see was a trying cinematograph show of the Zambesi Falls, followed by a quick-change artist whose repertoire was limited to appearing in all the hues of the rainbow. This man-chameleon was apparently the lock, stock, and barrel of the establishment, and was received with uproarious applause by the rest of the house. Then came a long interval, during which various lemonades and sweetstuffs had a great sale among the audience, nine-tenths of which, as one would

expect, were men. When, after a second edition of moving pictures, this time representing a bicycle accident on a Paris bridge, as well as a domestic episode verging on indelicacy, our old friend, the zany, reappeared, this time in the robe and beard of a mediæval wizard, we fled into the night.

Another sight of that wonderful city, better seen perhaps than described, was the January dance of the Persians in the Valideh Han on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Hassan and Hussein, grandsons of the Prophet. The Shiites, who, from the Turkish standpoint, may be regarded as the equivalent of Nonconformists, celebrate this sad occasion by stabbing themselves with long, sharp knives, and parade through the Persian quarter of Stamboul by torchlight, looking, as the blood streams over their white aprons, like a brigade of butchers out on strike. It is a spectacular business, with a number of ceremonies, in which doves and horses play a part, which a few Europeans, with a fancy for such nastiness, are privileged to see by special invitation from the private room of the Persian Embassy. I obtained a place at one of the windows, thanks to the kindness of Sir Henry Woods Pacha, who sent a gigantic orderly to escort me. My chief recollection of the occasion

is that an English lady gazed on the orgy unmoved, whereas two officers from the Austrian *stationnaire* turned faint and had to drink brandy to revive their nerves.

The bridge is another meeting-place of a hundred races. It is seen at its best on the frequent days when it is under repair, and all vehicles are in consequence stopped. The crowd then has matters its own way. The white-robed toll-collectors at either end gather immense tribute of *metalliques* (halfpence), said to aggregate several hundreds of pounds a day. Nominally, a great part of the harvest has always been handed over to the city hospitals, but actually it is said as a rule to have found its way into the maw of some shark or other among the Palace Party. Among other notable purloiners of such trifles was one Hassan Pacha, who also achieved notoriety by his extensive frauds in the matter of coal during the time that he was Minister of Marine. At the time of his death, which occurred some years ago, the Turks had a favourite story about him. They said that he went straight down to Hell to take Satan the latest news of his good friend Hamid, and that, at his own request, he was appointed head of the coal department, no sinecure in the infernal regions. Then things began to go wrong. Satan

lent no ear to a complaint by one of the minor devils, to the effect that leakages in the coal made it impossible to keep the fires going, but he could not so lightly overlook his mother-in-law's protest that she was freezing. So Hassan was degraded from his post, with the sufficient intimation that Hell was not the Turkish Navy!

If I say that half an hour on this bridge provides the most amazing panorama of humanity to be found anywhere in Europe, those who see for themselves will not, I think, gainsay me. It is an unending procession of *fezes*, turbans, felt hats, gowns, high boots, no boots, rags, and satins. Grave sheikhs and scowling *hojas*, swaggering Albanians, the Gascons of the Levant, brutish Kurds and quarrelsome Lazes, swarthy Arabs, pale Mongols, lean Persians, bearded dervishes, smug priests, Levantine counter-jumpers, all jostling their way to or from Stamboul. Half-way across is a shelter for the *hamals*, the brawny Kurdish and Armenian porters who stagger along bearing a grand piano on their backs as cheerfully as men of lesser stamina would carry a book. The *Hamal's* Rest is not, as benevolent folk at home might fondly imagine, a roofed shelter, with chairs set round a stove, but just a platform on which these human beasts-of-burden may rest their dreadful

loads a moment while they wipe their brows and draw breath before once more blundering through the press, with lowered heads and the eternal cry of "Varda!" (Look out!), usually uttered after they have knocked you down. Next to the new bridge is an older pontoon, which swings so violently when the wind blows down the Bosphorus as to upset delicate stomachs. From here a hundred steamers go hourly up the Bosphorus or down the Marmora, connecting with every waterside suburb. We often, in our superior way, reproach the Turks with their lack of enterprise in public works, yet they would be ashamed to keep the Thames unploughed by steamers to the outskirts of Greater London. The handling and equipment of some of these native ferry-boats, which have lately been acquired by a European syndicate, used to leave much to be desired; but nowhere, since I turned my back on Sydney Harbour in the eighteen-nineties, have I seen a better system of water communication between a city and its suburbs.

The cuisine of the Near East is less sharply defined perhaps than that of some neighbouring lands. He who would taste real *pilaf* and *dolma* must take his courage in his hands and plunge into some unpretentious eating-house in old Stamboul. *Pilaf* is a dry hash of chopped meat

and rice, and *dolma* is minced fish or flesh, served in a baked leaf. Those, however, who in Europe would not dream of shopping outside Bond Street or the Rue de Rivoli, will prefer the very creditable imitations served, on better china and finer linen, at Tokatlian's restaurant in the Grande Rue de Pera. Here also the red mullet, bass, or swordfish will furnish an excellent fish course, and the lamb is of the first quality. The beef, on the other hand, is eatable only when imported from Servia or Odessa. Though the Turks breed admirable buffaloes for pulling waggons along the roads, the flesh is of little more use for the *chef* to conjure with than coils of rope. A national delicacy called *yagurt* calls for passing mention. I always liked it best when passing, having no desire whatever to detain it, so closely does it resemble Devonshire junket, one of the few products of the duchy with which I am not in sympathy. It is, in fact, a kind of acid junket, figuring on French *menus* as *lait caillé*, and eaten with quantities of sugar. It must not be confused with the native *kaimak*, a local version of Devonshire cream, and, like it, agreeable with stewed fruit. Unfortunately, the Turks cannot stew fruit wholesomely, but must serve it as a sickly *compote* in syrup. The fresh fruit in summer is wonderful, and so cheap as to

encourage the kind of greediness that Sydney Smith deplored in his letter to Lord Murray. So plentiful, indeed, are the cherries, peaches, pears, apricots, green figs, grapes, and mulberries, that the meanest hotel gives a daily dessert which would not shame the bill of a Lord Mayor's banquet. Of native wines, little perhaps need be said. There is one known as *Balkan*, which can be had either red or white. It is made by a German firm; it is cheap and not nasty, but no one would pretend that it is a vintage of rare bouquet. The natives drink abundance of *mastic*, of which mention has already been made. Until recent years, the Turks were orthodox Mohammedans and took the Koranic view of strong liquor; but, with the liberty accorded under the Constitution, they are gradually acquiring some of the less desirable habits of the West, and their young officers return in increasing numbers from the German regiments, to which they are temporarily attached, with a fine taste in champagne and beer. I am not going to throw up my eyes and moan over this perversion of taste, but it is always difficult to see the sobriety of Mohammedan communities threatened by the introduction of "civilised" tastes without a passing sensation of regret.

And now, however regretfully, I must criticise this fair city of Constantinople, which Disraeli regarded as the one city in all the world fit to be compared with London. With so many natural attributes of perfection, its admirers may not ignore the drawbacks which survive from the bad old days. Its dirt and squalor still attract as much attention as the beauty of its site; yet there is no sound reason why, with a little care and expense, the City Fathers should not make it in the near future an ideal resort during the two months which elapse between the end of the Cairo season and the warming of the air in England. I venture, with all respect, to name a few of the matters which might be dealt with for the greater comfort of resident and visitor alike.

The Turkish Customs is vastly improved. There is an end to the *opera bouffe* censorship of books and printed matter, and the new arrival gets through the fiscal formalities more easily than in most capitals of Europe. It is, however, to be regretted that similar improvements have not been effected with a view to leaving the same agreeable impression on the parting guest. Why the irritating police inspection of luggage? why the small, but not less aggravating, fees? It might at first sight seem flattering that the

authorities should make it harder to leave the country than to enter it, but these ancient formalities merely enable petty officials to fleece the departing tourist of small contributions for which they in all probability do not account to the exchequer. There can, in the present state of political unrest, be no reasonable objection to the compulsory exhibition of a passport or *teskeré*. Such close scrutiny of all who go out of the country may long be necessary, and the authorities have a perfect right to exercise it so long as they think fit. But why, unless the police are on the look-out for stolen goods, open the luggage for inspection? And why, still worse, charge two piastres per package for this dubious privilege? Few who have enjoyed Turkey's hospitality will grudge these doles if they are really needed to augment her revenues, but some more agreeable method of levying them might surely be found, were it only the addition of a few piastres to the price of the *teskeré*. Those who arrive by the Orient Express have to cross the bridge, unless indeed they go by caïque, and here they are confronted with a feudal anachronism in the shape of a bridge-toll. At this, however, I am less disposed to cavil, since such a toll exists to this day on a high road within two hundred yards of my Devonshire home.

It must also be remarked that the visitor's first drive up the ill-paved, crowded, noisy hill to Pera, reeking with mud or smothered in dust, according to the season and weather, introduces him to the normal condition of this lovely city, which sits enthroned like an empress, but is as dirty as a kitchen-maid. The road, with its simple imitation of pavements, is usually inches deep in mud, and the constant collision of the cab wheels with ill-laid tramlines adds to the discomfort of that torturing drive. Heavy traffic, inevitable under conditions in which springs and rubber tyres would not last a week, makes these bad roads worse every hour, and the ill-conditioned horses, painfully overworked and wretchedly shod, shambling up and down the slippery hills, are a sight to wring the heart of a butcher. On the pavements, which are always out of repair, pedestrians shuffle all through the winter in goloshes a size too large for their feet. There is no attempt whatever on the part of the authorities to regulate the traffic, or at least there was none until recently, though splendid proclamations have lately been drafted with this object in view. There was neither written law nor unwritten etiquette. The cabmen drove how and where they pleased, without the smallest risk of inter-

ference from the police. Even on the occasion of the Investiture of the present Sultan, a procession in which all the shabbiest cabs in the city took part, I more than once saw an aged horse plant itself deliberately across the road, between the Eyub Mosque and the Adrianople Gate, blocking the way for ten minutes or so, without apparently occasioning surprise, much less annoyance, to those concerned.

Nominally, traffic kept to the right; actually, where there was not room enough to pass comfortably in the road, it went on the pavement, the *arabajis*, or cabbies, being under no sort of control. On the pavement there was the same absence of rule, with the pleasing result that half an hour's walk in the main street of Pera on a fine afternoon was more tiring than half a day in Oxford Street or on Broadway. With so many grave difficulties before them, the control of city traffic may perhaps seem a trivial matter to bring to the notice of those engaged in reconstructing an empire, but the reform has at least one merit which the Young Turks will not take amiss. It would cost very little.

Any adequate measures for making the streets more tolerable will have to take some account of the *hamals*. It is impossible not to feel sympathy for these brawny vegetarians, who do the work of

giants for the wage of dwarfs; but they make life a perfect terror by the way in which they lumber along the crowded pavements, with terrific loads of furniture or other merchandise, butting at all and sundry who cross their path, with a note of warning that they sound when it is too late to achieve its purpose. Their once too powerful guild was lately disbanded for the second time in history. The first was in the year 1826, when Sultan Mahmoud (he who settled with the Janissaries) made a clean sweep of them. Soon, however, they recovered their importance, as was apparent from the part they played in the recent boycott of Austrian goods. Little as they appear to be paid, they must nevertheless be capable of earning good money, as, during my stay in the city, I remember reading in the papers that one of the Customs *hamals* sold his berth for as much as £50. This abuse of selling vacancies was finally removed by a law of June (1909), and if only something can be done to make these human beasts-of-burden keep in the road, they may continue to be useful members of the community.

Better policing is certainly required before Constantinople can be recommended as a resort for nervous tourists. It was noticeable that during the troubles that attended the downfall of

Hamid, when, in fact, the city and surrounding district were under martial law, there was a greater measure of security in the streets at night, and even less jostling and horseplay by day, than there had been since the Constitution was proclaimed, flinging open the prison doors all over the empire and flooding the capital with gaolbirds and malcontents of every description, and with not a few that beggared description altogether. Those who resided in the capital during the winter of 1908–9 will long remember how scarcely a night passed without some fresh outrage being enacted in the streets. Indeed, men were held up in broad daylight in the main thoroughfares, and the suburb of Kadikeui, on the Asiatic shore, was the happy hunting-ground of an enterprising band of *Apaches*, on whom the police were unable (some even said unwilling) to lay hands. It would perhaps be unfair to expect perfect law and order in a city of a million inhabitants, in the throes of revolution, and on the borders of Asia, capital, moreover, of a land in which hitherto respect was for the sword only. It would be unreasonable to forget that even the *bois* of Paris have lately been so dangerous after nightfall that the peaceable citizens have been compelled to enroll themselves as special constables. Indeed, during that winter we read of

armed anarchists seizing a London street car and firing promiscuously at their pursuers. The worst feature of the disturbances in Constantinople was the growing conviction that such outrages were undeniably less frequent in the zenith of Abd-ul-Hamid's power, and even the friends of liberty had reluctantly to admit that thousands of Levantine cut-throats had been excluded from the city in the days when the "shadow of God" had not yet lost his substance. The culpable weakness or apathy of the police, coupled with the unrestrained sale of cheap firearms previous to the establishment of martial law, made life a terror. This abuse of liberty was the subject of bitter comment in those sections of the native press not over head and ears in love with the ways of the "Committee," and the *Yeni Gazette* (*i.e.* New Paper) of 15th March published a strong leader on what it called "The Obsequies of Civilisation," deploring the recurrence of suicide and other crimes in Stamboul. Those acquainted with the sympathies of the *Yeni Gazette* were not surprised that, within a month of the downfall of Kiamil Pacha, it should have taken a welcome opportunity of throwing discredit on the Young Turks in general and on the "Committee" in particular. The personal note in its recriminations was self-evident, yet impartial observers of

the situation could not honestly condemn its gloomy view as an exaggeration of the evil.

Few cities in the world, outside of America, suffer more damage from outbreaks of fire than Constantinople, and it is to be hoped that the new *régime* is concerning itself very practically with the inefficiency of the fire brigade, and also with the suicidal policy of building wooden houses. Few of the hotels are provided with adequate fire-escapes, and the theatre exits would prove death-traps, one and all, in the event of a panic. With innumerable streets of closely packed wooden hovels, with half the native population careless and the other half criminal, it is hardly to be wondered at that, even at a season when the snow lies thick on the ground for days together, there should be half a dozen serious fires every week, some the admitted result of arson, the rest of a neglect that is little less criminal. The swift summons to the fire brigade was until recently hampered by the absence of telephones, Hamid having sternly forbidden their installation in the city, lest they might prove a help to conspirators against his throne and person. All that could in these circumstances be done was to post watchmen on the Tower of Galata and on a few other convenient posts of observation, and these, as soon as they saw an outbreak of fire in some

FIRE BRIGADE, CONSTANTINOPLE.

Quaint, rather than efficient, the brigades use a hand-pump so primitive as to be little better than a toy. Summoned by signal from some watch-tower (until recently, telephones were forbidden), they inevitably arrive late on the scene and are always accompanied by a throng of volunteers, popularly regarded as bent on loot.

[*Face p.* 40.

Face p. 40.]

quarter of the city, had to signal with guns and coloured lights as best they could, informing the nearest brigade of the spot at which its services were required. The fire brigade, duly summoned, would then proceed, none too rapidly, to the scene of the fire, the regulars clad in chain helmets and leather jackets, and, running beside them, a great company of volunteers, popularly regarded as inveterate looters. The pump and hose were the merest toys, and I have seen a building gutted by the flames before the brigade even came on the scene of the conflagration. Considering the great height of many of the houses, and the complete absence of fire-escapes, it was indeed remarkable that loss of life was as a rule avoided. There is a local legend to the effect that the chief of the brigade commonly parleys with the owner of the burning house, making his bargain for salvage while the flames are devouring the other's property. This is probably an invention, but, if there is any truth in it, such robbery should promptly be investigated by a parliamentary committee of inquiry.

The giving of alms is as imperative in the mandate of the Koran as prayer, fasting, or the Pilgrimage. The Prophet would have none of the charity which begins at home, and it is no

uncommon sight, in the streets of eastern cities, to see ragbags of men giving alms, who look much more like asking for it. Orthodox Mohammedans, moreover, must give freely and without rebuke. Among the injunctions laid on them in this connection is one to the effect that it is better to be kind and merciful, than to give alms to a beggar and taunt him. It is true that the human limpets of Pera would rather any day have *baksheesh* and blows than neither, but the commands of the Prophet were laid only on True Believers. The worst of it is, that these hardened mendicants, knowing their market, give most of their co-religionists a wide berth, and fling themselves whining on the tourists of other creeds. They are seen at their worst on the bridge, where they stand in line behind the toll-keepers, eager to relieve the wayfarer of his change and to sell him the certainty of Paradise for a few *paras*. I was much struck, in the course of a conversation with a Turkish gentleman on this matter of almsgiving, by an interesting difference between the Bible and the Koran. The former has it that "he who hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord," a text that recalls a famous charity sermon delivered in Dublin by Dean Swift. The Koran, on the other hand, lays it down that he who gives to the poor *gives* to Allah. Usury is forbidden

to the Moslem. What he gives, he gives, and he may not lend, even to the Lord. If he should get back anything in the form of future reward, so much the better, but he does not stipulate for it. Unfortunately, the act of giving to one beggar, however sorely his piteous condition may wring your vitals, is but holding out honey to flies. The sightseer might often be tempted to bestow a few coppers on some unhappy wretch who solicits his pity, but for the certain knowledge that a hundred eyes are upon them, and that such a deed of mercy must inevitably bring the whole festering crowd about his ears; so that the only sound policy is to keep the whole boiling of them off with a stick. These beggars are an eyesore. The authorities lately displayed some desire to cope with the problem of the vagrants and unemployed, but, even though the begging-bowl be an honourable emblem from Constantinople to Canton, these mendicants should, in a city largely dependent on foreign gold, be under some sort of police control. They should be kept to regular beats, where they are easily found by such of their co-religionists as crave to smooth the way to Paradise by the giving of alms, and where the unbeliever need not venture if he desires to be free from their eternal whine for *baksheesh*, and from the persistent laying on of diseased and

dirty hands, with which these appeals to his better nature are usually accompanied.

Another minor annoyance of daily life in Turkey is the difficulty of obtaining small change. Something should speedily be devised by Parliament by way of either altogether abolishing this purchase of change, or at any rate placing the *sarrafs*, or money-changers, under stricter surveillance. Some of these horse-leeches, who must be directly descended from those whose tables were overturned in the Temple, are greater knaves than others, but most of them are quick to profit by the ignorance of their clients. Those who change an English pound with the worst type of *sarraf*, receive in exchange nineteen shillings, losing thereby five per cent. by the transaction. More often, it is true, the changer tenders 19s. 4d.; but this is not all. He usually gives it in the form of 5 *mejidiehs* (a large silver coin of the value of 3s. 4d.) and a few loose *beshliks* (10d.) and *piastres* (2d.). On changing each *mejidieh*, unless you purchase for its full value, it is generally necessary to sacrifice a piastre (*i.e.* a further 5 per cent.), and the Tobacco Régie frankly accepts the *mejidieh* at only 19 piastres. As if all this deduction were not enough, there is the grave risk of being given spurious coin, with which the country is flooded. It is

difficult to warn the tourist against such roguery, but he will be on the safe side as a rule if he declines to accept any coin so smooth that the design is effaced. So open is the robbery that *sarrafs* will take back and change all five *mejidiehs* without a murmur. There are a few honest *sarrafs*, though I never made their acquaintance, but the majority are vampires and should have their teeth drawn. Such reforms move slowly in Turkey, and it is now many months since Dagaverian Effendi laid before Parliament a *takrir* to abolish the *sarrafs* and the system by which they thrive.

Constantinople is the proud possessor of thirty or forty thousand mongrel dogs with no other owner. It has from time to time been suggested that these homeless vagrants, each brigade of which keeps punctiliously to its own quarter of the city, should be done away with by the sanitary authorities in the interests of the public health and safety. This, however, is more easily said than done; nor is such a clearance merely a question of cost and difficulty. One Sultan tried to reduce the numbers of the dogs by causing several thousand of them to be removed to an uninhabited island in the Sea of Marmora, but public feeling ran so high on the subject in the bazaars, at a moment when he could not afford

to excite discontent, that he was compelled to bring them back again. Personally, though I mention the street dogs as one of the evils of which complaint is often made, I doubt whether there are adequate reasons for their destruction. They are gentle by nature and rarely subject to rabies. They guard the streets at night far more efficiently than the aged watchmen, who by tapping the pavements with their sticks give effectual warning to criminals whom they might otherwise catch red-handed. By day, they perform priceless scavenging in the dirty streets, which is more than can be claimed for the municipal dustmen, whose chief delight is to patrol the main thoroughfare of Pera with a revolving brush drawn by a horse, which simply removes the mud from the road and sprays it impartially over the clothes of people on the pavement. The Turks, though they do not, like ourselves, regard the dogs as animals to be fondled, have always treated them with consideration, throwing them scraps of food and providing straw for the mothers and pups. Those who would most benefit by the extermination of the dogs are the owners of pet animals, to which these wastrels are a menace. It is no easy matter to get a small dog through the

streets without being beset by a howling, growling pack of curs that resent the presence of such intruders in their quarter. Otherwise, they are little or no trouble, and if their presence annoys anyone in a wayside coffee-shop, he has only to shout "*Oist!*" a vernacular injunction to quit, which the animals never disobey.

A truce to grumbling! Its beggars may be limpets, its dogs mongrels, its streets suggestive at times of the earthquake at San Francisco or the finish of a football match, but Constantinople has the fascination that endures. The bazaars alone, though they may not compare with the real thing at Tiflis or Damascus, the former hung with Persian carpets, the latter gleaming with local brassware, are the delight of tourists. For the resident, their chief interest is as the hotbed of political intrigue, for it is in their dim recesses that reactionary Old Turks forgather to spit on every political reform as a triumph of the Christians. Whenever a crisis is impending, the first act of the police is to close the bazaars, and at the first symptoms of unrest the timid traders are seized with uncontrollable panic. An amusing incident illustrated this nervousness of the bazaar folk at the time of Kiamil's downfall. On one afternoon of that exciting week, a rascal, taking

advantage of their frame of mind, ran at full speed along the main avenue, calling out, as he passed—

"Why do you stay? Why do you stay?"

They did not. With one accord, fearful of massacre, they gathered up their robes and fled in wild disorder, returning an hour later when all was quiet, only to find that their shops had been looted by the knave and his accomplices!

It was on a warm and starry night in August that I took regretful leave of this Queen among cities. The *Memphis*, another boat of the *Messageries* line, hoisted her anchors, and the lights of Stamboul and Scutari faded astern. It seemed to my fancy that through the gathering darkness the old city looked after me with friendly eyes, no longer regarding me as a stranger, but whispering a promise of welcome should I ever again find myself within her gates. As a man does on such occasions, I passed in rapid review the pleasant days I had spent among those vanishing hills, the lessons learnt, the illusions dissipated, and some others which time had left to me. And I came to the conclusion that the howling of the dogs, the hum of the bazaars, the "Varda!" of the *hamals*, the cries of those who sell cakes or fruit in the crazy

streets, and even the maddening tap-tap of the *bekchi's* staff on the uneven pavements as he goes his fruitless round all through the night, would be the echoes of wholly happy memories.

CHAPTER II

SCENES IN THE HOLY LAND

Contrast between Egypt and Palestine—Cairo—Dangerous Landing at Jaffa—Steamers—Orange-Blossom—Hotels—Horse *versus* Train—Modern Jerusalem—Church of the Holy Sepulchre—Russian Pilgrims in Jerusalem—Mosque of Omar—Beauty of Bethlehem Women—Unruly Folk in Jerusalem—Danger from Bedawin—A Hired Horse—Ride to Jericho—Men of Bethany—Excavation of old Jericho—German Influence in Palestine—Elisha's Fountain—Wandering Bedawin—Bathing in the Dead Sea—Fishing in the Jordan—More Pilgrims—Beauty of the Wady Kelt—Running Water in Syria—Contrast with Palestine—Fertility of Country round Beyrouth—Syrian Rivers—The Sea of Galilee—A Casa Nova at Tiberias—Fishes of Galilee—The Upper Jordan—Sulphur Baths—Fertility of Syria—An Eviction of Bedawin—Population of Damascus—A Turkish Bath—Mosque of the Ommayedes—Bazaars—Railroads of Syria—Ruins at Baalbek—The Spread of Education—Mud at Beyrouth—Antiquity of Navigation in the Mediterranean—Last Impressions of the Holy Land.

Is there, in the whole of a man's wanderings up and down the winding way, any feeling quite to be compared to that with which he first sets foot amid the hallowed scenes of Bible Story? An Iroquoian or a Bonze might possibly approach the low coast of Palestine unmoved, but I defy any of my friends, who certainly include neither

red Indians nor yellow monks, to step ashore from the surf-boat at Jaffa without experiencing a call of the blood, a long-forgotten feeling of reverence for the sacred soil which cradled the religions of the West. If anything is wanting to intensify this effect of sentiment, it is supplied by coming overnight from Egypt. It is another flight into the wilderness. From Cairo to Jerusalem is from the changed to the unchangeable. There is about the Land of the Pharaohs nothing intrinsically irreligious. On the contrary, an atmosphere of mystery broods over the turgid Nile which, even when not interpreted by Gautier or Loti, enthralls all who are in sympathy with a mummy Egypt not yet run in the interests of bondholders. Yet, by contrast with the cities of the Holy Land, modern Cairo is a debonair, devil-may-care focus of frivolity. Its daily round of amusements, its swift automobiles and smart polo ponies, its crowded terraces, its dances and its bridge, its dress and chaff and laughter, though not perhaps meat for the denunciations of a Solomon Eagle, offer startling contrast from the poverty, simplicity, and unprogressive stagnation of a land in which improvement spells desecration. No one wants to see modern civilisation introduced into Canaan. No one, with a heart

above an ape's, desires to see a petrol launch on Genesareth or a toy railway up the Mount of the Beatitudes. No one, on the other hand, except Egyptian Nationalists, has anything but praise for the Occupation of the Nile Valley. The miracles which it has wrought in seemingly unpromising soil have been praised, more or less grudgingly, by every civilised nation in the world. Americans hail it generously, and even Germans bestow reluctant meed. That the natives think otherwise is perhaps natural, and who shall blame them? The wise, strong hand of Cromer still lies heavy on their shoulders, and so we are for ever hearing fresh clamour for autonomy from a nation, nine-tenths of which Allah fashioned for fellahin. Aird and his colleagues have tamed the tyrant Nile, and freed the peasant from the moods of the cruel river-god who for centuries mocked his fruitless struggle for existence. If the peasant, giving thanks for this relief, turns a deaf ear to the wiles of agitators whom Shaitan sends to preach sedition, it is to his credit. Cook's stern-wheelers churn the sacred mud and carry trippers to the cataracts. And the hotels! Where else in all the world is there so perplexing a choice? Is not the terrace of Shepheard's a household word throughout the empire, an asylum for the great, a paradise for the little who

love to mingle with them? Is not the Savoy proverbial for its princes, the Semiramis for its gaiety, the Ghezireh Palace for its riverside gardens? I have heard sybarites sneer at its cuisine. Personally, my simple appetite asked nothing more stimulating than to trifle with its *Tortue clair*, *Filet de loup-de-mer au Chablis*, *Côte de bœuf à la Reine*, *Suprèmes de Sarcelles St. Hubert*, *Artichaux sauce béarnaise*, *Dindonneaux rôtis*, *Mousse à l'ananas*, *Pâtisseries*, *Fruits* and *Café turc*, with a goblet of something from another card. But then I am no epicure, and a modest little dinner of less than a dozen courses satisfies my rustic needs. Had I but suspected the combined German and Oriental cookery which was destined to wring my stomach during the next few weeks in the Holy Places, I think I should have taken away some of the last Ghezireh lunch in my pockets.

Jerusalem, like the neighbourhood of the Sphinx, is hopelessly slimed with the trail of them that trip. Yet there is this difference. Cairo has shaken off the mouldy memories of the Pharaohs. She wooes the visitor with her bold eyes the instant he steps off the uncomfortable train from Alexandria, and she remains a lovely memory even when she has emptied his pockets.

The cities of the Bible make no such meretricious effort to allure, but, merely because they cannot help doing so, attract all comers, not merely the flippant tourists, who are for ever sending picture postcards to their cousins in Hammersmith or Chicago, but also the greater and more interesting contingent of reverent pilgrims, out-at-heel, upholstered in rags, yet earning by their footsore tramp to the shrines such gladness of heart, such exaltation of spirit as is not vouchsafed to them that travel thither by the bought favour of Cook's coupons.

The new arrival from Egypt lands at Jaffa, that Joppa from which Jonah embarked long ago on his adventure with the whale. Jaffa is a port by courtesy only, and, like the "port" of Saffi on the coast of Morocco, it is as often passed as visited by steamers going up or down the coast, so bad is the landing in any but the smoothest weather. Nothing has been done to remove its deadly *chevaux-de-frise* of jagged rocks, as much a menace to-day as when Josephus described them, some rising high out of the water, others lying awash. The local shore-boats are sturdy craft, and the stalwart fellows who handle them have nerves of iron, as well they need; but, even with such material, nervous folk always catch their breath as the boat is carried between the

SHORE BOATS, JAFFA.

Probably, as indeed they have need to be, the strongest surf-boats and sturdiest boatmen in the East. The landing is often dangerous, as will be seen from the rocks, referred to by the historian Josephus.

[*Face p.* 5

[*Face p.* 54.

sentinel rocks on the crest of a long roller, with eight or ten oars backing water to keep her head round. Yet familiarity breeds contempt even for the deadly rocks of Jaffa, and I shall long remember the admirable *sangfroid* with which the aged wife of an American missionary, who was in my boat, bore the ordeal, in curious contrast to the dread plainly written on the faces of younger folk. Poor old lady! that was her last visit to Jaffa, for she died a week later up in the hills.

Several lines of steamers ply between the Golden Horn and the Syrian coast, either direct or by way of Alexandria and Port Said, and they all suffer from the competition of those German and Austrian leviathans which cart wealthy Americans round the show-places of the Levant, a thousand at a time. Chief among the local lines is the Khedivial Mail, an Anglo-Egyptian concern, with one delightful boat, the *Osmanieh*, which took me as far as Alexandria, and others of less pretentious calibre. Though the vessels are nominally English, the staff, from skipper to stewards, are mostly Italian. (So is the cook.) The boats of another line, that of Florio Rubattino, are also large and well found. The cabins of the *Perseo*, which conveyed me from Egypt to Jaffa, are roomy, and fitted with a regard for

comfort which perhaps warrants the notice hung in each, to the effect that—

Passengers are kindly requested to remind that it is not allowed to bring on deck cabin furniture.

As there was nothing beyond a rickety camp-stool that could have been of the slightest use upstairs, I found no difficulty in complying with this reasonable request. These are ocean-going boats of four or five thousand tons, and the *Perseo* had a spacious top deck, and a bathroom in which Daniel Lambert might have sported at his ease. The cooking was Levantine, but there was a fried quail, with salad, for those with qualms touching richer fare.

The *Perseo* had to lie some way out, and we had a long pull to the reef; but even before we were within its barrier the offshore breeze bore the intoxicating scent of orange-blossom, and we found cases of the golden fruit being transferred from the backs of gurgling camels to the lighters moored beside the quay. The water was choppy, even inside the rocks, and we did not get ashore without splashed boots and wet luggage. Yet, once clear of the not very exigent Customs, the traveller gives thanks that he should have lived to see this Land, and, wet or dry, feels tempted to remove the shoes from off his feet.

Of hotels, Jaffa does not offer much choice, nor, for the matter of that, will those fresh from Cairo find any difficulty throughout the Holy Land of leading the simple life by way of contrast. The Hotel du Parc will serve for the one night that it is necessary to stay at Jaffa pending the departure of next day's train for Jerusalem. It has no park, but an agreeable garden tenanted chiefly by parrots, monkeys, and small children belonging to the German colony in which it is situated. The German influence predominates at this port, and a large congregation attends the Lutheran church. The hotel is kept by some brothers called Hall, all of them very obliging, and one, at any rate, a keen sportsman, and the happy possessor of a white Arabian mare on which he once beat the train from Jerusalem by five minutes!

This, while saying a good deal for the mare, is not saying much for the train, and indeed it is about the slowest conveyance of the kind, even in a land where hurry is accounted of Satan. It leaves Jaffa at a very early hour, no doubt for fear lest it should not arrive at its holy destination before dark. Why more travellers, with time in hand, do not cover the distance between the sea and the Sepulchre on horseback is a mystery. It might possibly take

them a few minutes longer, but a horse could be hired for about half the train fare; while the high road, if a trifle hard in places, passes such historic landmarks as the vale in which young David slew Goliath, together with more than one half-forgotten battlefield on which Israelite and Philistine smote hip and thigh and plucked the ripe spoils of victory. Personally, I plead guilty to the train. For this I have two excuses to offer: I was limited as to time, and I did not know it before. One experience of such a journey goes a long way. It is a memory of a lifetime.

Jerusalem, once one gets away from its sacred associations, is just a typical eastern city. It is crowded, dirty, badly drained, quartered by beggars and overrun by tourists. Its tutelage has been tacitly assumed by our German friends ever since their War Lord rode into the Golden City through a special gate built for the occasion. The object of this extravagance was not, as has been assumed, to pay an exceptional compliment to the Kaiser, but to evade an old prophecy to the effect that any reigning sovereign who rides into Jerusalem by the ordinary way will remain as its king. So the Kaiser ambled beneath his own private gateway, and his troops filed through the Jaffa Gate alongside.

A typical hotel of Jerusalem is the Hotel Fast. Fast is the name of its German proprietor, not of its morals, and its generous cooking is of the kind to tickle the easy palates of Hanses and Hedwigs on their honeymoon. As if the charges for such homely service were not already sufficient, a tax of 10 per cent. is added to each bill (in accordance with a notice in the bedrooms) in lieu of gratuities to the staff. I did not remark that the waiters relaxed their attentions under such treatment, but such arbitrary standardising of generosity is a knavish trick, all the same.

Though there is much in the Jerusalem of to-day that is not pleasing to the fastidious eye, though it is Jerusalem the Dirty rather than Jerusalem the Golden, it is impossible to wander down the hilly Street of David, or on the hills outside the walls, or in the shadow of the Sepulchre, without reflecting on its changing fortunes. First it fell into the desecrating hands of the Moslem, then it was snatched from the Infidel by fierce Crusaders, and last the Moslem came again, and the Jews wept and wailed beside the ruins of their Temple while their city changed hands, but nevermore was theirs. To-day, alas, the tourist is the principal object of worship in all the creeds.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a beautiful if showy fane, is given over to internecine struggles between the rival sects that profess their ritual within its sacred precincts. Greeks, Latins, Armenians, Copts, and Abyssinians worship in its chapels, and whenever their processions clash they set to like pagans and would drench the hallowed stones with blood, but for the restraining presence of stolid Turkish guards, who, to keep the peace, have to be on duty day and night, and at every service held in the different chapels. Just before Easter the pilgrims arrive in force, and the great building is thronged with a mighty gathering from all the Russias, from every Orthodox and Latin land in Europe, from the banks of Nile and from the mountains of Abyssinia. The majority are Russians, fair-haired ragbags of men and women, quite oblivious of their destitution, glowing with the sacred fire, holding themselves blest to have laid their relics on some little altar to be blest, or to have burnt a candle before some image. Down in the Cave, where the Greek Empress is said to have witnessed the unearthing of the true Cross, I came upon a trio of Russian women chanting in wonderful harmonies, the tears streaming unchecked down their earnest, dirty faces, that were transfigured

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE—THE GATEWAY.

The courtyard of the great Church is here shown comparatively empty, but at Easter-time it is one struggling mass of pilgrims. A party of Russian devotees, who have certainly tramped all the way from Jaffa, may be seen entering the door, having, no doubt, bought a fragment of the True Cross, or other holy relic, at one or other of the stalls, that they may lay it to be blessed on the shrine of their favourite saint.

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Face p. 60.]

with a gleam of such unalloyed joy as their Grand Dukes cannot buy with all the millions wrung from moujiks. When you have seen such surpassing happiness, even for a moment, you feel a strange disinclination to laugh at "superstition." It may be that the illusion is robbed of half its power by the jewelled patriarchs, the smug-faced priests, and the hawkers selling spurious relics in the courtyard of the Church, yet, over and above the distaste for such meretricious modes of trading on ignorance, there remains a reluctant envy of these simple worshippers who flock to the site of Golgotha. That which saddens and disgusts beyond all redemption is the daily tumult between rival sects within the chapels, and the truth comes home, even to some who would gladly deny it, that the churchmen are killing their church.

This blemish on the most holy church in Christendom is enhanced by the calm peace which reigns in the Mosque of Omar, which, with an exterior that is a masterpiece of mosaic, and an interior that encloses, so they say, the rock on which Abraham would have sacrificed his favourite son, stands overlooking the city on the site of Solomon's Temple. Here is no whisper of discord between rival sects, but only harmonious worship of the Most High, though

sceptical visitors must keep a straight face when shown two adjacent pillars through which fat Moslems try to squeeze, since they gain thereby ten years more of earthly life, doubtless to spend it in *kief* and prayer. After the still more holy buildings at Mecca and Medinah, this is the chief mosque in all Islam, ranking before San Sophia, the finest mosque of Constantinople, where I once watched a service in which hundreds prostrated themselves on their praying carpets. The chaste simplicity of its interior comes as a shock to anyone fresh from the bejewelled ikons round the Tomb of Christ.

Of all excursions round Jerusalem, I best loved the sweet ride out to Bethlehem. The way lies through undulating country and past smiling fields which, at Easter, ought by right to be bathed in verdure, but which, alas, I saw dying of drought. In these fields it was that the gentle Ruth lived her pretty idyll; and here, too, is the spot where the Wise Men tarried that they might look once again on the portent flaming in the east. The village of the Nativity, with its little church and narrow streets, is far more peaceful than Jerusalem. Its women are the loveliest in all that land, and it is passing strange that, even though

THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, JERUSALEM.

The picture gives no conception of the glorious colour of the tiles in its mosaic. It is one of the largest and handsomest mosques in the Sultan's dominions. It stands on the site of Solomon's Temple, and contains, among other relics sacred throughout Islam, a hair from the Prophet's beard and the stone on which Abraham would have sacrificed his son.

[*Face p.* 62

[*Face p.* 62.

travel was hard in the days when art still lived, the Flemish and Italian masters should not have gone for their inspiration of the Holy Family to the village itself, instead of filling the galleries of Europe with Dutch and Florentine Madonnas, fat and florid, lean or sallow, any and every but the true type. I saw one young mother there, with a round-faced babe on her arm, more lovely, I vow, than any Madonna on canvas. The exterior of the Church of the Nativity, which was built over the grotto or manger in which Christ was born, is unimposing, and is entered by a very low doorway that tells eloquently of the constant fear of sudden attack; but the interior is roomy, and the Grotto, ornamented with tinsel like the Sepulchre, and, like it also, guarded by armed Mohammedans, was packed with pilgrims, one of whom annexed my revolver, surely a strange spot in which to be robbed of a firearm!

That the population of Jerusalem is less of an omelet than that of some other cities of the Ottoman Empire, arises from the fact that, like Salonika, its citizens consist four-fifths of Jews, who number, it is said, eighty thousand out of one hundred thousand. These peaceful traders spend six days of the week in commerce, and on the seventh they rest in amazing gabardines

edged with fur. Indeed, on Fridays their women, with such of the men as have nothing to sell, wail bitterly against the outer wall of the Temple, a somewhat pathetic sight (though a little of the weeping seems to be stage-managed, most of it is sincere enough) much in favour with those who sweeten their holidays with a pocket kodak. The remainder of the population of Jerusalem includes a large proportion of Syrians, Christians by faith, but Israelites by feature, and very hard indeed for any but an expert to distinguish from their Hebrew neighbours. The Mohammedan element is, I imagine, small, though I never obtained actual statistics, and indeed all census and cadastral returns in the Near East are treated with artistic latitude.

As the citizens of Jerusalem are not the warlike tribes of Maccabeus, the Holy City has generally, but for the fighting inside the Church, with occasional open-air engagements between the supporters and enemies of Damianos, the Greek Patriarch, been free from tumult of late years, but it is noticed that the Syrians have been unaccountably restless since the Constitution. For this disagreeable state of affairs, two reasons may be assigned. One is that, since the general proclamation of equality and fraternity, they regard themselves, though Christians, as on equal

footing with the Mussulmin, and, as a result, no longer prize the protection of foreign consuls by which they formerly set such store, and which they could only count on if of good behaviour themselves. The other reason is to be found in the inefficiency of the provincial police. If a third cause for this spirit of lawlessness exists, it is to be found in the poverty-stricken state of the country round Jerusalem, which, at the time of my visit, had been smitten by weeks of drought. At any rate, whatever the causes, there could be no question of the disorder that prevailed. I remember a case in which a tall negro held up a resident inside the city only an hour after sunset. The son of Ham first asked for alms, then, failing money, for a cigarette. The other, seeing that this was merely an excuse to come to close quarters, suddenly produced a heavy revolver and handsomely offered to shoot the black man in the stomach. But the negro had learnt philosophy in the desert, and, remarking that this was not the man he was looking for, he turned on his heel and walked rapidly up the street. As a matter of fact, in view of the widespread misery occasioned by want of water, the Bedawin in the surrounding country were remarkably quiet. The crops were backward ; the animals were starving for want of food. Yet it was rarely that these wild men

molested unprotected tourists, as they would have done, under less provocation, in America. Their peaceful behaviour is sometimes attributed to the fact that most tourists pay for local guards to protect them on their cross-country travels. Americans, in particular, who, though violent and hardy folk in fiction, are, without exception, the most nervous tourists of any nationality that visit the East, rarely go twenty miles on horseback without an armed guard to accompany them. They reminded me of my own travels in the interior of Morocco ten years earlier. In that land, I also had armed soldiers with me, not indeed from choice, but because the authorities, fearful of complications should anything befall me, insisted on providing (at my expense) several weedy-mounted soldiers to stick to me like leeches wherever I had a fancy to wander. In Palestine, however, I firmly declined such escort, partly because I had the great advantage of the company of Mr. Anis Jamal, of Jerusalem, on my ride to the Dead Sea, but also because I had seen what manner of men these brave guards were. Parties of Americans used to drive in carriages, and the "guard" would invariably start an hour in advance. This was done ostensibly to see that the road was clear, and it was remarkable and pathetic to see how readily these people, than

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A BEDAWI.

Here is a Sheikh of Bedawin, from East of the Jordan, in all his war-paint. Note the sharp stirrup-iron, which, throughout the East, takes the place of spurs. Its edge can infuse life into even so somnolent a beast as that in the picture appears to be.

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whom none in the world are more astute in business hours, believed such fairy tales. In reality, of course, as any child could see, the "guard's" idea was to take himself out of harm's way in case of trouble, and to leave an open field and no favour to such of his countrymen as might have an eye to loot. As a matter of fact, the danger is very slight, existing chiefly in the imagination of those who love to return to their friends in the suburbs of London with such blood-curdling stories of adventure as won the hearts of Dido and Desdemona, and will continue to win the hearts of others as fair and as frail for all time. Whenever I am told of the perils of riding unprotected in the Holy Land, I like to recall an experience which happened to a Master of Winchester School, whom I met more than once on the trail. He was riding from Jerusalem to Galilee with no other company than that of an aged muleteer. He was not even armed. I had met him in Jerusalem before he started, and had, as a matter of fact, asked whether he would not take a revolver, for luck, but he was inclined to pooh-pooh the idea and preferred to travel light. He had covered most of the distance, and was, as he told me, just congratulating himself on having turned a deaf ear to the alarming stories told about Bedawin, when, in a trice, one of these

gentlemen of the road, in full accoutrements, barred the road and demanded *baksheesh*. What might have happened if my unarmed friend had offered any resistance I know not. What actually did happen was this. The humour of the situation, that he, of all men, should be so held up, struck him so forcibly that he burst out laughing in the other's face. Whether the Duval of the desert was offended by his levity or doubtful of his sanity, will never be explained, as he clapped his long spurs into the sides of his stallion and galloped away as fast as it could carry him.

I must confess that Jerusalem itself disappointed me a little. Possibly I was unfortunate in paying it a visit during the season of its greatest popularity with German and American tourists, but there it was. Brazen minxes from Utah and fat men scarred with the cherished memories of silly duels did not harmonise with the holy scenes that I would have loved to muse on in more congenial company. I heard the tomb of Christ described as "*grossartig*," and the Garden of the Agony as "just bully," and so my gorge rose. One must not expect to have Palestine to himself, but when I pay my next homage at those shrines, it will not be at Easter. There are too many others bent on the same errand, and the effect

is distracting. Under happier conditions, the ancient city would grow on a man wonderfully, and he might almost disagree with Erasmus, who, because he had no chance himself, declared that it was not so important to see Jerusalem as to lead a good life. There is no logical reason why a man should not do both, I suppose, but when a fox says that grapes are sour because they are out of his reach, even Erasmus may throw logic to the winds. Those with only a few days to spare can enjoy a hurried glimpse of all the "sights" in a week-end: the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Mosque of Omar, the Friday wailing of the Jews beside the Walls, the winding, hilly Street of David, with Mount Zion beside it, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the peaceful village of Bethlehem, may all be visited in that space. If the man in a hurry has any regret more poignant than others, it is that, thanks to the conflict of rival archæologists, such grave doubt should have been allowed to rest on many of the sites of Bible Story. This is a pity. What did it matter? Those who have faith in the old traditions only wanted to look on each spot and worship. It did not really matter to them whether it was precisely the mathematical site or not. And what have these learned men done for them? Taken away the certainty and,

for the sake of a little notoriety, substituted doubts which rob the city of half its atmosphere and associations. With two Gethsemanes and several Golgothas, the whole thing seems a sham, and one envies those ignorant pilgrims from the Volga, who, knowing nothing of these scientific controversies, reverently bow the knee at the wrong place and never question that they are on holy ground.

The most notable excursion from Jerusalem is that to Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, and it may be done in three days. The vast majority of Germans and Americans do it in cabs, but I strongly counsel horseback, not merely because the cabs of Jerusalem are even more frightful than its horses, but for the sake of a side track, impossible for vehicles, which will presently be described. Unless he should have friends in the city, the visitor will need to put himself in the hands of some tourist agency, and I imagine that the Agence Lubin will answer most purposes for those who have not already made their arrangements with Cook. The French agency is worked by one of the Hall family, of the Hotel du Parc, Jaffa, in conjunction with Mr. Anis Jamal of Jerusalem, whom I was so fortunate as to find unusually free from work, so that he gave me three days and accompanied me to Jericho, a

boon which meant much to one ignorant of the language.

The first move was to hire a horse. Jamal had his own, but for mine we repaired to the establishment of a vivacious stableman outside the Jaffa Gate. After a number of forlorn hopes had been trotted out, I secured a brute of thwarted ideals and with an action suggestive of a jerboa tired of life. I had met the lively proprietor of the stable at the railway station in Jaffa the week before, and had been much struck by the address with which he had slapped the face of a gigantic groom on that occasion. We made friends on the spot, and he then offered to fight me for the hire of the best horse in his stud. As it appeared that he had in mind a trial of dagger *versus* fists, the match was off, but he treated me as a brother and gave me of his best. I wanted to see his worst, merely as a matter of curiosity, but Jamal refused to translate this, as he said that it might offend him. So, no doubt, it might have, yet not half so sorely as the devilish antics of his spavined hack offended me during the next forty-eight hours. We had with us a pack animal for the cameras, fishing tackle, and oddments, and on the homeward journey I bestrode this humble beast of burden, transferring the baggage to Rosinante, a change for the better so far as I was concerned,

though a risk for the cameras. Only, in the whole of Palestine, did I see two horses provided for in the Tenth Commandment. One of these was Joseph Hall's white Arabian that beat the train to Jaffa; the other, a magnificent chestnut stallion at Jericho, private property, and better so, since, of those who hire horses on such expeditions, some have hands that would quickly ruin the mouth of a crocodile.

Even at the beginning of April the plain of Jericho swelters all day under the fierce caress of a burning sun, so that an early start is advisable. The way lies at first through crowded streets. Camels are being cinched up for the day's work. Natives are drinking their coffee, smoking cigarettes, and laughing over local gossip. The women go about their morning errands, scarcely troubling to hold a corner of their veils across their faces, and even the beggars are quiet, since the harvest is at that early hour not ready for the gathering. Indeed, this is the moment to get a glimpse of the true Jerusalem, not the show place stage-managed for staring sightseers. The road, on leaving the city, winds past the walled-in Garden of Gethsemane, now in the hands of monks, and, with an inspiring view of the slaughter-houses, leads through the sun-baked hamlet of Bethany. The men of Bethany are

A STREET SCENE, JERUSALEM.

Here is a typical bit of the East, the men loading up the camels, the women, in their white cloaks, sitting about on the ground. This is just outside the Jaffa Gate, and the camels will presently set out for that port.

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born fighters. Like the men of Barbados, they may have Irish blood in their veins, for they would rather hit than argue, loving, like Sir Nigel Loring, to "do some small deed" whenever they get the chance. I nearly saw a "small deed" of the kind, but had no time to see the finish. It was on our return from Jericho that we came upon an excited group some three miles from Bethany. Two breathless natives of that place, who had run all the way, were holding up four armed horsemen from east of the Jordan, who, as they explained to Jamal, owed them money for a horse. It promised to make a very pretty quarrel, and, an attempt to induce my companion to act the part of Solomon having failed, it looked as if the gentlemen from beyond the river would eventually be compelled to part with either their gold or their hides.

The ride from Jerusalem to Jericho, most of it downhill, might occupy three hours or twelve, according to taste. Respect for the peculiarities of my horse precluded all idea of hurry, and when Jamal suggested a halt for luncheon at the wayside inn kept by a bankrupt Greek, who speaks eight languages, all unintelligibly, but to his own unqualified satisfaction, I heartily assented. Indeed, the longer I looked at the horse, which was peacefully swallowing the Greek's kitchen

garden, the less inclined I felt to resume the journey. In fact, the sun was down behind the mountains when at length, having seen distant gleams of the Dead Sea far ahead, we rode beneath the green trees that embower modern Jericho, a little settlement of inns and stables that, with the verdure, make the one bright spot in all that accursed plain.

Old Jericho, the city which fell before the trumpets of Joshua, who must have been a worthy forerunner of Sousa, lies about a mile farther on. Its ruins are no longer undisturbed. As one of the many results of the edifying Brotherhood between Yildiz and Potsdam, I found a number of Germans in possession, employees of a scientific society to which a *firman* gave the right to excavate this ancient site. Here, accordingly, were spectacled overseers issuing guttural orders to gangs of native women, who, carting away the dirt as they lay bare the evidences of a decisive battle ignored by Seeley, come and go like files of ants. These enthusiasts resent the presence of anyone armed with a camera, and one of them even went so far, two years ago, as to knock a kodak out of the hand of an American tourist with such unnecessary violence that the back came off and the entire film was of course spoilt. Had the

JERICHO.

Here may be seen the native women toiling, under German overseers, at the work of removing the débris that has overlain the ancient city ever since its walls fell down by faith. Photographing its remains is not easy work, as the Germans are very jealous of cameras and have before now been known to knock one out of a tourist's hands. As luck would have it, only small and short-sighted overseers were on duty when the author managed to take this one.

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rule of Hamid lasted but a little longer, who knows but it might then have been necessary to have our passports for Turkey endorsed at the German Embassy! Rumour has it that the Germans are unearthing wonderful treasures at Jericho, and if they could only exercise rather more courtesy towards all and sundry who unwittingly trespass on the scene of their labours, few would grudge them the fruits of their enterprise. Unfortunately, the behaviour of the Kaiser's subjects in Asiatic Turkey, and in particular their tacit assumption of a paramount prestige which is somewhat hypothetical, cannot fail to alienate the sympathy of those who would otherwise admire the tenacity with which they held to the shadow of their former position until they actually regained some of the substance. Their determination to come out, if not on top, as near it as possible, in the face of odds so overwhelming that only the apathy of their rivals prevented their being insuperable, was superb. The doggedness of German policy in Turkey is a lesson to ourselves, and, as one who detests Germany as a world-power, I humbly lay this tribute at her feet: *Es lebe die Frechheit.*

Beside the ruins is a little reservoir, associated in popular tradition with the fountain of Elisha, who is said to have sweetened its bitterness with

a handful of salt. A little stiff after the day's ride, I sat for an hour at its margin in the twilight, catching small fish with a bait of breadcrumb, and letting my eyes wander from the float to rest on the mists creeping up the slopes of the Mount of the Temptation.

Just outside New Jericho is a little settlement of so-called Bedawin. Now, the true Bedawin dwell a three days' ride east of the Jordan. They are wealthy pastoralists and dress in silks. Many of them profess Christianity, which does not, however, prevent their joining whole-heartedly in the raids for which these nomads have for all time been notorious. These pseudo-Bedawin of Jericho are peaceful Arabs, with more than a dash of the brew of Ham. They invited us to coffee, and, of course, there happened to be a marriage feast on the night of our arrival. There always is. Trippers are delighted to find that their visit coincides with so interesting an occasion, and part freely with *baksheesh*. I was not taken in by this wedding, having been a wedding-guest under similar circumstances elsewhere in Eastern countries ; but what did interest me was the discovery that one of these "Bedawin" had journeyed all the way from Morocco, and was, in fact, a cousin of one Boubekr-el-Ghanjawi, sometime British Agent at Marrakesh, whom I

had known at that city ten years before. It was on the way back from the pilgrimage that this pious Moor had been struck by the beauty of his present wife, and, since she was no Ruth to leave her country at his bidding, he had perforce to stay at Jericho. It was difficult to see very distinctly by the flickering light of the log fire round which we sat drinking coffee, but it struck me that the lady, to whom I was duly presented, must have passed the zenith of her charms some time since.

Next morning, it was boot and saddle before sunrise and away to the Dead Sea; and we were nearing that dreadful lake, the most depressing water of all my travels, by the time the first sting of the sun made me shake my *keffiah* more loosely about my face. What a scene of desolation lay around us! Dead shells and dry bones strew the barren soil on either side of the stony track; burnt grasses and withered shrubs crackle under the horses' feet. Not since I rode one unforgettable day through just such another plain, Behera-ou-Guentoor, which runs beside the Atlas Mountains, had I looked on such horrors. Yet it seemed that, even in this cemetery, there was the mystery of life, for both plovers and partridges rose in front of us from patches of cover that looked incapable of hiding a locust; herons

flapped weakly over baked soil that would not have maintained a fasting frog; and even among the small shingle on the seashore ran little yellow spiders, which must be vegetarians, since there seems to be no trace of insect life for them to prey on. A single boat broke the gleam of these lifeless waters. It is, I was told, used in bringing produce from the farther shore; but there it lay in the shallows, with no trace of a crew on its deck. Many accounts have been written of the strange sensations which attend a bathe in the Dead Sea. I used to think that these were exaggerated, but I now think that many fall short of the truth. The feeling is indeed so different from that of swimming in water of more normal density, that description is not easy. In the embrace of this singular sea, a man loses control of his actions and behaves like a cork. The water is warm, even in April, and after a long ride the dip is refreshing; but it is like no other bathe in a store of memories which range from the Baltic to the sulphur springs of the Rocky Mountains. The water is so buoyant that ordinary swimming is out of the question. The body tilts over at angles that it would never assume under other conditions. If the swimmer lies on his back, his feet, instead of remaining on the water, shoot up in the air and point to the

sky. If he lies on his face, taking good care to keep his eyes and mouth shut tight, he can remain motionless in a position familiar in frogs for just as long as he can hold his breath. Yet in our seas or swimming baths at home, such an attitude will be found exceedingly difficult to assume, even for a moment. The one thing that the swimmer in the Dead Sea cannot do is to sink. Even the *Dictionary of National Biography* would float, and a baby could meet Mr. Holbein on equal terms, for neither could do more or less than keep afloat. Suicide is as impossible as speed. It is less a bathe than a wallow, but few can resist the mute invitation of its surface after a taste of the burning plain, and there is the additional solace that they are dry in the smoking of half a cigarette, the evaporation leaving the body coated with a glittering layer of salt like the crystals on a snow man.

And now the sun was creeping down the incarnadined sides of the Mountains of Moab, and by the time we were recovering the horses for our ride to the Jordan, others had arrived on the scene and were bobbing in the sticky water, both Roumanian pilgrims and American tourists, the pilgrims silent, musing, no doubt, on their coming immersion in the sacred stream, the Americans in holiday mood, mouthing the quaint

conceits of Narraganset or such other of their bathing resorts as memory might recall.

The Jordan has such holy associations that, like Rob Roy Macgregor, the visitor approaches it in a spirit of reverence. This is well, for he would otherwise vote it a disgusting torrent, dirtier than the Clyde below Glasgow, swifter than the Mawddach below Barmouth, more overgrown with vegetation than many a stream in the heart of the New Forest. A glance at such a combination will show its hopelessness for the ordinary diversions of those to whom rivers are a playground. For boating, bathing, or fishing it is too dangerous. A dip in its mud brings joy only to those armed with the faith that blinds. It must have been delightful to Macgregor to navigate its shoals and rapids in that canoe of his, but, once his task was done and his book written, few will be tempted to do likewise. Fishing I essayed, with the patience of my craft, during many hours of tropical downpour, with nightingales singing furiously in the tangled undergrowth on the other bank, and midges in their millions goading me to thoughts ill suited to such a scene. Under such conditions there was no hope of success, no pleasure, indeed, beyond the novelty and romance of pitching a line in the sacred stream. Regarded critically

THE RIVER JORDAN.

In the background may be seen some sheds, on the right bank, and here is the supposed spot of the Baptism, still used by pilgrims from many lands. On the left bank is a typical group of trees, such as overgrow the banks to the water's edge from here to the Dead Sea, which is not far distant. The Jordan is swift, muddy, and strewn with boulders, and therefore a dangerous river to any one unacquainted with its peculiarities. The photograph was taken with the camera pointed upstream.

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in the cooler mood of retrospect, the river was hopeless; too swift in mid-stream, too overgrown and too obstructed by snags under the banks; too dirty everywhere for the fish to see anything less advertising than an electric searchlight. Yet what true angler asks himself at the moment whether success be possible? With a passionless patience I sat in that drenching rain most of the afternoon. I had with me only float tackle and a fly book, equally useless in a muddy millrace where only a heavy leger bated with fat worms coated with luminous paint could have had any result. I tried with bread, with grasshoppers, and even with some small worms that an obliging native dug for me, but the light float raced over its swim like a feather, and I doubt whether the bait ever hung six inches below the surface. Seeing that the fishes hereabouts are bottom-feeders, this was about as useful as fly-fishing on the Dogger Bank. As Jamal began to grow restive, not without good reason, as we had to ride back to Jericho before dark, I put away my tackle and bought a shillingsworth of local fish from an old Greek. These I first photographed, and then (having had them fried that evening at Jericho) ate. I wish I had been satisfied with photographing them. Their flavour recalled that of the first and last pond-bream that I ever

consumed. It was the first I ever caught in my life. It came from out the bosom of the mere at that classic resort, the Welsh Harp, and I wished, after choking over its muddy bones, that I had left it there. But that must have been thirty years ago, and I was old enough to know better than to eat fish from such water as that of the Jordan, which smells like a drain. I have a bottle of it on my desk, and, though it was boiled that evening at Jericho, sending the sulphurous sediment to the bottom, and though it has been kept tightly corked ever since, its bouquet even to-day would stun an elephant.

It is a perilous river, this Jordan. Even at the hallowed spot where pilgrims of every hue—yellow-haired Slavs, sallow Copts, bushy-headed Abyssinians, and Syrians of many shades—are thrice dipped by their "popes," the devout are sometimes carried off their feet. The banks are steep and slippery, and at a spot where I all but underwent unrehearsed immersion, a lad was not long since swallowed up in the angry waters while his mother screamed helplessly on shore. Yet neither dirt nor danger mars the joy these simple creatures feel in bathing and carrying away little flagons of the precious water to comfort bedridden relatives who will never look on any river more holy than the steaming Nile

PILGRIMS AT THE JORDAN.

At first sight the figures in the picture look more like Mohammedans than the Christians they really are. The two in the foreground are Abyssinians, members of a religious fraternity maintained at Jerusalem by Menelik. The rest are Copts, who have come from Egypt to bathe in the sacred stream, after which they will return to their homes, bearing with them little flasks of its water to comfort their less adventurous relatives on the Nile.

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or frozen Neva. Cheerfully these poor wretches spend the savings of a lifetime spent in toil at a living wage that they may, once ere they die, steep their sinful bodies in the healing Jordan. Those that hail from Egypt come in affluence, driving the distance from Jerusalem in the best cabs money can hire, or in country waggons roofed with canvas; but the Russians come and go afoot, tramping the burning roads with tattered top-boots, and singing hymns to keep up their spirits. These people reck nothing of the dangers of the sea or of the hardships of the land. All the blessing they ask of life is a sight of the Sepulchre and a visit to the Jordan. These achieved, they return unmurmuring to the knout. It may score backs that have dipped in the Jordan, but it cannot break their hearts. Of a truth, these ragged tramps show a smart world the real meaning of the faith that heals.

On the ride back to Jerusalem I plunged into the hills that I might throw a fly in the Wady Kelt, a beautiful little mountain tributary of the Jordan, popularly associated with Elijah's brook Cherith. I had heard of its pools and falls at the Bishop's Schools in Jerusalem, as a favourite camping-ground of the boys during their summer holidays, and from what I had been told by Mr. Reynolds and Canon Brown, it seemed that,

of all the waters of Palestine, this alone might offer possibilities to the fly. Here, then, not far above an old mill, where, as the miller, a Mohammedan, was a friend of Jamal's, we left the horses, I bathed and fished, catching a baker's dozen of game little fishes (*Capoëta damascina*) within an hour. I should like, in the approved fashion, to name the fly which succeeded best, but I left all that I had with me in the fig-trees and other impediments which overgrow the steep banks. Still the fish, which rise readily and fight properly, as befits the children of mountain waters, are not fastidious, and I predict success for any small, bright fly, so long as the fisherman keeps out of sight. The least shadow on the surface of the pool, and these fishes, though they may not be as educated as those of the Test, lie low and refuse to be gulled. They are not unlike dace in shape, but two little yellow beards beneath the head proclaim relationship with our barbel. Two or three of my catch weighed over a pound, and in one deep pool, which I could not reach, I saw several that must have bettered two. The Wady Kelt is the prettiest stream, without exception, that I saw in the Near East. Yet since it lies at the end of some rather narrow mountain tracks, and is inaccessible for vehicles on wheels, this gem,

THE WADY KELT.

This photograph, for which the author is indebted to Mr. Reynolds, Head Master of the Bishop's School at Jerusalem, shows some of the boys in their Easter camp. It is a beautiful little mountain stream, popularly identified with Elijah's Brook Cherith. As it lies off the main road between Jerusalem and Jericho, it cannot be reached in carriages, and is thus missed by the majority of tourists, who prefer that mode of travel to horseback.

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enough of itself to redeem the horrors of the neighbouring plain, wastes its sweetness on the desert air and murmurs, with its chorus of happy birds, unheard by tourists, thousands of whom pass within a mile or two of its bed, yet never suspect its existence.

There is not too much running water in Palestine. Syria is better off in this respect, as anyone can realise for himself by going from Jerusalem to Damascus. The Holy City pants all through the summer, looking down with burning eyes on the scarred plain that leads to the Dead Sea, and turning longingly to the mocking clouds that go unbroken on the wings of every wind. On the other hand, the Syrian capital looks forth, even at Easter, from its green canopy of walnut and mulberry, with its streets gladdened all through the year by the soothing music of a full river that descends from the snows of Lebanon, and for miles around the city of Damascus the peasants are, by comparison with those of Judea, prosperous and contented. Thus heartened, its citizens are skilful artificers in brasswork and in inlaid woods, industries in which they have excelled since the days when Crusaders caroused within the walls of Acre. In Jerusalem, the only industry is that of exploiting the pilgrim and the tourist. Jerusalem

is, in fact, sadly given over to the worship of Mammon. The best of its citizens are dragomans; the worst are mendicants. Damascus cares little for the tourist, and there are few beggars in its streets. The Damascenes may be fanatical; they may despise the Christian and hate the new *régime* that favours civilisation, yet there is something at least dignified about their allegiance to the traditions of their faith, and so busy are they at their work that they rarely molest the stranger within their gates, even though they as rarely cultivate him. Nor, outside of Damascus, does the prosperity of Syria rest on such arts and crafts, for the standard of cultivation is high throughout the magnificent plain that stretches to far horizons. Not an acre is left idle where it can be made to smile with wheat or barley by the crudest of harrows drawn by the quaintest of teams. Orchards mark the winding course of the singing Barada for miles, and already in the early days of April these are rich with the promise of fruit and astir with the music of birds. To the foothills of the Lebanon, almost indeed to the roots of its stately cedars, the face of Syria is veiled in brilliant emerald such as the eye seeks in vain through the length and breadth of arid Palestine. As I rode out from Beyrouth to the Dog River, I must have passed ten

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THE BARADA RIVER, DAMASCUS.

When Naaman, the leper, scorned the waters of Israel, he had, no doubt, the foaming Barada in mind. The photograph shows a suggestive contrast: on the right bank Bedawin are resting with their camels, standing for the old order; on the left, two natives may be seen repairing the railway—a reminder of the new.

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thousand mulberry trees, and just outside the town the railroad to Damascus climbs through a stupendous olive grove, which I have heard an American missionary figure at an area of twenty-seven square miles. No doubt, the good man offered this amazing estimate in all good faith, but, without taking it too literally, it suffices to admit that this is in all probability the largest plantation of olive trees in the world.

The Barada, which is diverted by conduits so as to flow through every quarter of Damascus, is a typical Syrian river, glacial and thickened with alluvial mud. It is useless to the fisherman, but there are other virtues in a river than to provide sport, and it certainly brings health and wealth to the city. I drove along its left bank as far as Doummar, over a road which would strain the heart of a camel, possibly the worst road in that land, which is saying a good deal for it.

Another stream of the same order is the Dog River, which falls into the Mediterranean a few miles north of Beyrouth. Like the Barada, it is unfishable. The road from Beyrouth passes a little Maronite chapel, said to have been erected on the spot where St. George gave the death-thrust to his dragon. I am interested in

that dragon, for, in view of the fact that he is said to have pursued it all the way from Haifa (or Caifa), the next port down the coast, is it not reasonable to assume that it may have been the Sea Serpent? St. George himself also acquired new interest on this occasion, for one of the masters at the Bishop's Schools in Jerusalem drew my attention to a very curious tradition, current in those parts, to the effect that he and Elisha were incarnations of one soul. Nay, as if such fame were not sufficient for one spirit, it also took up its abode in a Mohammedan shell, whose earthly name has escaped my memory. Everyone, of course, knows the guidebook account of the cuneiform inscriptions of the Assyrian dynasty which are chiselled on the face of the cliffs which guard the mouth of the river, but I cannot here pretend to impart any informing knowledge of these remains. As I stood beside them, the river was rushing tumultuously beneath its little bridge, the result of fresh snows that had fallen heavily in the Lebanon the week before. The late snow melts more slowly, so they say, than that which falls at Christmas, yet the sun was too hot for it, and so, swelled with pride, the Dog barked loudly on its way to the sea through a valley embroidered with mandrake, marigold, oleander, and all the other

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FISHERS OF GALILEE.

A typical crew of fishers—Peter and Andrew—on one of the fishing-boats of Tiberias. The picture was taken near Samach, where the railway between Haifa and Damascus touches the shore of the lake. The fishes of Galilee have been famous ever since Roman times and are still abundant, though no longer, as formerly, exported to the markets of Europe.

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flowers which commonly mark the course of water in those lands.

If running water has a charm of its own, so has that which is still, and of all the lakes in the Holy Land, or, for that matter, in the Near East generally, none other can compare with Galilee, or Genesareth, well called "Jehovah's Delight" by the rabbis of old. It makes an enchanting picture in the peace of a spring morning, with just one little angry squall coming down a ravine in the hills to recall the Doré painting of the storm that was bidden to be still. On a breezy day it is delightful to sail over the bosom of this historic mere, but it is a chance to snatch while it offers, for the wind has a way thereabouts of falling calm without warning, and this may mean a long pull for the brawny crew of Syrians from Tiberias. That town, built by Herod, and once famed for its forum and its synagogues, not to mention a citadel, of which vestiges are left to this day, is impressive in the mystic glamour of a moonlight night; but by day, seen in its true colours, it is dirty beyond redemption, the home of beggars, smells, and such terrific fleas as have made it, according to local tradition, the Court of the King who rules over that athletic tribe. From these plagues you may find sweet peace

in the Casa Nova of the Franciscans, where I tarried a week-end, preferring its austere hospitality to the prospect offered by a German hotel filled with Americans. I fell in love with the ascetic simplicity of the little cubicle assigned to me, with the frugal fare served in the dim refectory, and, above all, with the bright companionship of an Italian lay-brother, a simple soul of a man, half-jovial, half-sad, yet seemingly contented with the unambitious surroundings which his vocation had marked out for him. Oh, gentle comrade of the Galilean moonlight, in your coarse brown cassock and well-worn sandals, I know not, looking gratefully backward from a world of more restless purpose, the more to pity or to envy you!

Anxious to see something of the lake, I took a felucca from the bay at Tiberias, and in it coasted, with a favouring breeze, past Magdala, birthplace, they say, of Mary Magdalen; past the frowning Mount from which the crowd received the only sermon that will never stale; past Bethsaida, where little food fed many mouths; and past Capernaum, where nowadays a solitary monk from Würtemberg is occupied in digging up the ruins of an ancient synagogue. Digging up a synagogue seems strange occupation for a monk from Würtemberg, but what

CAPERNAUM.

It looks to-day as if Luke's prophecy had been fulfilled and Capernaum, which was once exalted, thrust down to hell. Little remains but the ruins of a synagogue, in course of excavation by a Bavarian monk.

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would you? Close to the point at which, through a little delta of its own carving, the Jordan enters the lake, I ordered the men to run the felucca ashore, and as my feet crunched the shells and shingle on the narrow beach, immense shoals of fishes darted from the shallows to the greater safety of the deeper water, once again reminding me of the historic reputation of this fish stew, which once sent its cured wares to the markets of imperial Rome. The fishers of Galilee, though no doubt reduced in numbers, are as active as ever; nor, in all probability, are their methods any different from what they were nineteen hundred years ago. Peter and Andrew may no longer throw down their nets to become fishers of men, but they have not lost their cunning with the seine and cast-net. They also fish with horsehair lines, and, I regret to add, with pellets of poison, which they fling to the fishes that are so silly as to trust them. It is a pity that the poison merely stuns the fish instead of also spoiling it for food. The fishes of Galilee, of which something is said on a later page, are of greater interest to the naturalist than to the epicure, who may be advised to eat sparingly of them.

The Upper Jordan was, if anything, a still more poignant disillusion than its lower reaches,

for I had, for some reason, expected to find it cleaner as I got nearer to its source. Times and again those of us who wander up and down the map form these preconceived notions, and no amount of disappointment seems to cure us of the habit. It is true that scenes immortalised on posters and on picture postcards, not to mention the screen of the itinerant lecturer, leave no room for such error. Those who have never been beyond Margate know the Pyramids and the Taj Mahal by sight as well as they do St. Paul's or the Eiffel Tower; but it is an every-day experience of travel that the real bears little resemblance to the expected. Anyhow, whatever I had fondly hoped to find it, the Jordan is as swift and as dirty where it enters the Sea of Galilee as where it enters its final goal farther south. If I made a cast or two with my fly-rod, it was less with any hope of rising a fish than from curiosity to see what effect my performance might have on Peter and Andrew, otherwise on some Bedawin who had pitched their tents at the mouth of the river and were spreading their nets on the grass. Some of them had been tending a herd of black buffaloes in longer grass near by, and these forsook their charges and drew nearer; but when I suddenly made a back cast, and cracked a fly over their heads, they

retreated again. All might have gone well had the beeves not also taken an interest in the proceedings, but several of them left off munching and came so close to the water's edge (with me between) that I grew nervous, and hooked one of them on the ridge of its shaggy back. The fly, with a yard of gut, remained in the brute, only tickling it, but the result was a small stampede which roused a huge brute of a dog, compared with which the Hound of the Baskervilles was a King Charles Spaniel. It came straight for me, and would probably have eaten me then and there, but that its owner smote it so fervently on the buttocks that its howls echoed over the water. At this pleasing moment, the dragoman came along with my camera. He was not my dragoman. I never have one. He belonged to another party, consisting of a Frenchman and a Belgian dame of a certain age. As they did not interest him sufficiently, he bestowed himself on me until we parted at Damascus, free, gratis, and for nothing, during which I found him most helpful. He is, indeed, something of a character, and deserves a word in passing, if only for his descent from the reputedly great Crusading family of Gelet (his own name is Matthew Gelet), and his kinship to the inventor of the Gilette razor. I

only have his own authority for these affinities, and it would be hard to say of which he is more proud. It is a far cry from Jerusalem (Pal.) to Boston (Mass.), but I warrant none of his cousin's razors can be sharper than Matthew when he likes. He does not always like. He sometimes prefers to smoke himself to sleep with a hubble-bubble, but for which eccentricity he would, though young, be one of the smartest guides in all Palestine. Well, to me, standing among buffaloes and Bedawin, and lately rescued from the brute of a dog, enter Matthew of the Clan Gelet, with my reflex camera, which I promptly focussed on the cattle, following them into the long grass so as to get a better picture. A score of little Arab children immediately followed, dancing round me, plucking at my arms, and gibbering evident disapproval of my actions. What their meaning might be, I was at a loss to understand. The farther I advanced into the waving grass, the more excited grew these offspring of wandering romance. Surely they could not object to my photographing their tribal oxen! I hailed Matthew, and from him learnt the true state of the case, which was that they were frightened that, being only in sand-shoes, without even socks on my feet, I might be bitten by the adders that were just waking

up for the business season. There you have the true Arab nature. I ask—I only ask, not expecting any answer—whether a company of village urchins in dear old England would have troubled their immature souls to save a foreigner from snakebite. Far be it from me to suggest that they would have sneaked along the other side of a hedge to watch the fun when the snake was trodden on. Yet I am morally certain that they would at least have proceeded calmly with their top-spinning, or cat-hunting, or whatever occupation engrossed them at the moment, and let the stranger be bitten to death before worrying about him.

Without seriously advocating the claims of this beautiful lake as the goal of an angling holiday, I am quite sure that anyone with a selection of small bright flies, and a few days in which to make himself familiar with the somewhat peculiar conditions of light, might, by wading in the shallows and casting just behind the rocks, fill his basket every morning with fish going about three to the pound, and an occasional pounder to stretch his cast. I had with me that day only one small Coachman. At the second cast from the little jetty at Bethsaida, I rose and caught a half-pounder. My third and fourth casts were made a little way along the beach. At the first

of these, I rose about a score of fish, all so anxious to eat the fly that none succeeded. At the second, I rose a walnut tree that had been looking at the fun over my shoulder. It played me for a couple of minutes, at the end of which my one and only fly remained in its arm.

Of the birds which fly over the gleaming surface of Genesareth, not the least pleasing memory of my visit, something is said in another chapter. About a mile out of Tiberias are the famous baths of Emmaus, natural hot sulphur springs, which had a high reputation in ancient history. Over these have been erected dark and stuffy bath-houses, unattractive enough to myself, but promising relief to Matthew's Frenchman, who suffered from weeping eczema or something equally depressing. I accompanied him as far as the entrance to the bath, and then smoked cigarettes on the beach until such time as he should emerge. A terrible outcry from the recesses of the building brought myself and others to the spot. It seems that his intention had been to immerse only one leg, or whatever portion it was that wept, but, having first lost his spectacles, he next lost his balance, and his whole eighteen stone fell into the cauldron. He came out of it the colour of a boiled lobster, and the missing spectacles were not returned until next morning,

just as we were all starting for Samach, the point at which the railroad between Haifa and Damascus touches the shore of the lake. I had been conveyed to Haifa, during the preceding week, by Russian steamer from Jaffa. Although the run took only six or seven hours, so that, leaving Jaffa at four in the afternoon, we got off at Haifa the same night, the agent obligingly insisted on my paying the full price (I think it was a sovereign) for a cabin which there was no chance of my using. It is true that this included a meal called *dîner*, the masterpiece of which was free *vodka* of humble quality, which was placed on the table in water-bottles. One young lady, indeed, unacquainted with Russian ways, poured herself a full libation, under the mistaken impression that it was water, and next moment she was spouting like a whale. The line from Haifa to Damascus is under native control and is well managed. It runs through magnificent plains, black with Bedawin and their camels, and then, after skirting the Sea of Galilee, passes, in full view of Mount Hermon, among hills carpeted with poppy and with hollyhock, and so along the gorge of the Jordan, which it presently leaves for the open plain round the city.

Even before the days of railroads, the importance of the country round Galilee, lying as it does

on the caravan route between Damascus and the coast, must have been considerable. Here, too, apart from such advantages of position, was a smiling country, generously watered by the melting snows of Lebanon and offering refreshing contrast to the parched scenes around Jerusalem, which had none but foul streams. This it was which moved the leper to that famous taunt of his—

"Are not the rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel?"

Indeed, as the unfortunate Bedawin are learning to their cost, the fertility of Syria is already attracting the notice of foreign investors. It was in the neighbourhood of Samach that I came across a pathetic instance of the inevitable ousting of the old order by the new. It seems that a French syndicate had purchased a considerable area of suitable land on which to grow cotton, and on this property a great horde of Bedawin, driven by drought from the hills, had camped, with their women and camels and flocks, as their like had done for all time. Knowing nothing of the meaning of traffic in real estate, these sons of the wild had moreover disregarded a notice to quit served on them by the new owners of the soil. So the Frenchmen, having indeed no alternative, sent their Consul to the Turkish Government, which, after those delays not unknown in the

Orient, casually dispatched a small expedition of eight hundred soldiers, with four field-guns, and orders to remove the trespassers. The poor Bedawin, not even yet realising that the situation was serious, still declined to move. Then the end came, swiftly. When at length it was made quite clear to them that what hitherto had been No Man's Land was now the property of the Christians, they piteously offered to surrender all their camels if only they and their families might be left in peace for the sake of the grass and water denied them on the higher ground. When this last request also was declined, they folded their arms, and, with superb fatalism, stayed where they were. Other negotiations having failed, one of the guns spoke. The first shot killed twenty men, several of the women and children, and a large number of camels. The terrified tribesmen did not wait for a second, but fled in wild disorder, fled to starve in their barren hills, and to realise as best they might that they would henceforth be nomads in name only, since they were no longer free to wander where they pleased. The pity of it is that tragedies such as this must be of frequent occurrence if the country is to be developed with the aid of outside capital. Where can one fix the blame? The Frenchmen had clearly a right to the land they had paid for. The

Government had no choice but to act on the representations made by their Consul. The soldiers were mere servants of the Government; nor, in this case, did they even take full advantage of their powers. It is indeed probable that their very moderate bag was due to sympathy with their countrymen rather than with the interlopers. The Bedawin themselves could not believe that their hereditary liberties were gone. It was just an episode in the struggle between civilisation and savagery, the struggle that can have but one ending. The Young Turks have their difficulties, no doubt, in Roumelia, but it is in their Asiatic *vilayets* that they have most to fear, since the rooted prejudices of reactionaries will be far harder to combat than the intrigues of their neighbours in the West. No doubt, the worst fanaticism of all is to be found in the lawless Yemen, but Palestine and Syria will take long in wooing from their old ideals.

This fanaticism is concentrated at Damascus, perhaps the most interesting city in the Holy Land. Here are few Jews and fewer tourists, but a compact Mohammedan population, wedded to the old order, and intriguing with whole-hearted enthusiasm against the would-be saviours of Turkey. At the time of my visit there was much talk of a flourishing secret society, which went

PERSIAN HORSE-DEALERS, DAMASCUS.

Horse-dealers have a reputation of their own all the world over, and those of Persia are said to live up to it. Early in the year, they resort in large numbers to Damascus, and may be seen at every corner talking over their bargains.

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by the pleasing title of the "Order of the Bloody Hatchet." It had for its object the suppression of Christians by methods indicated with sufficient clearness in its official style. I came to know of it by mere accident, but no one seemed anxious to afford further information. It is not, however, surprising that it should enjoy supporters in that wild city, which was savage enough to kill the Historian of Civilisation. There are few resident Europeans, and not, I believe, as many Russian subjects as could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Yet Russia thinks it worth while to keep up a Consulate-General. Need I say more? There is in the length and breadth of the Ottoman Empire probably no city more free from foreign influence. It is Damascus for the Damascenes with a vengeance. The bazaars are kept by Moslems for Moslems, and the tourist is all but unnoticed. Tiflis, in its Tartar quarter, makes some approach to the same ideal, but the effect is marred by the presence of Cossacks, an element absent from the Syrian city.

No one should take leave of Damascus without having a Turkish bath at the Queen's Bath, or Hammam el Malaky, which is situated about half-way along the busy street of the Sannounieh Market. It is by no means the same experience as that of the bath in Jermyn Street. Candour

compels the confession that the company is more mixed than at home, including some very imperfect ablutioners. Here, in the middle of a cool hall, which opens off the street, is a marble *nafourah*, a basin in which a little fountain makes dreamy music, and round this recline a score of sleepy bathers, producing through the mouthpieces of their *nargilehs*, or water-pipes, gurgling sounds like those of hungry camels grumbling in a caravanserai. Here the visitor undresses, and his clothes are folded away in a drawer beneath the divan on which he presently reclines, swathed in Damascene brocades, until such time as he makes his way to the inner bath-house. The poorer bathers, paying but a few *metalliques* for the privilege, dispense with the services of an attendant; but that is playing only half the game, and I also strongly advise an additional *baksheesh* as the price of a private alcove, for, however interesting a real Turkish bath may be to those in search of such local colour, it does not gain from the immediate proximity of a native gentleman whose body is a vivid reminder of the sixth plague of Egypt. Flesh is heir to one or two eccentric maladies in the romantic East, and it is worth a franc or two to give them a wide berth. The Syrian bathman soaps you more thoroughly and kneads you more fiercely than at home. On

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A MINARET.

This is the equivalent of the church steeple in Mohammedan countries, and in place of church bells the Faithful are called to prayer by the voice of the *Muezzin*. On this minaret, which belongs to the famous Mosque of the Ommayedes, at Damascus, several of these *muezzin* may at times be heard calling simultaneously, and their cry of

LĀ ALLĀH ILLĀ ALLĀH.

has a strange effect, coming out of the blue sky over the hushed city below.

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the other hand, the proceedings do not terminate with the alternative of the cold plunge or douche, to which we are accustomed, and perhaps sensitive folks will welcome the omission. Nor is there any approach to the hottest room in Jermyn Street. Indeed, the outer hall, where you cool off after the bath, is not even as warm as the street. Here you can recline for an hour, smoking cigarettes or the insidious hubble-bubble, and sipping coffee or a curious infusion of cinnamon, while a watchful attendant, on the look-out for *baksheesh*, changes your embroidered robes half a dozen times. Such a bath is invigorating before breakfast, but I doubt whether for "banting" purposes it is equal to ours.

The finest building in all Damascus is undoubtedly the Mosque of the Ommayedes. (For the style of its architecture, etc., see the guide-books.) A perfect chorus of *muezzin* call the Faithful to prayer from its lofty minaret, and the Faithful troop with their prayer-carpets in their thousands. Close to the scene of their worship reposes the gallant Saladin, his last sleep sweetened, let us devoutly hope, by the gigantic wreath laid in his mausoleum by the mailed hands of one compared with whom Saladin was a peace-at-any-price man. Here, also, are the mortal remains of the Prophet's grandsons,

Hassan and Hussein, whose martyrdom I had seen celebrated some months earlier in Stamboul. As they are also buried in Persia, these brethren seem to be divided even in death. There is within the Mosque a relic of interest to Christianity, none other, indeed, than the head of John the Baptist. If Salome should contemplate a pilgrimage to this shrine, I shall be happy to act as dragoman. In fact, the chief Bible associations of Damascus, in addition to the Baptist's head, are the house of Ananias (*not* the liar of that name), the Straight Road, and the spot on the city wall from which Paul escaped in his basket.

Yet, if Damascus has less perhaps to offer the pilgrim than Jerusalem and its environs, its industrial importance is beyond all comparison greater, and it is double-starred in the traveller's memory as the one Turkish city without its unemployed, so merrily do its silk looms hum, so incessant is the tapping of the artificers in brasswork. As has already been said, the tripper is to all intents and purposes ignored, and even in the two hotels most likely to attract him (the proprietors are brothers-in-law), he is fleeced only in moderation, and not, as elsewhere, to the bone. Nor is he the same object of deference in the bazaars as at Stamboul, where his

appearance is the unfailing signal for bundling native customers out of the store and setting chairs for his party, a general post which is most irritating. Of course, should he wish to do his shopping in Damascus, which is the most maddening place in all the land for that purpose, there is nothing to prevent his paying, as elsewhere, three or four times the right price for the wrong article, but he is not bowed down to. Indeed, I wandered into one or two little side alleys of the bazaars where the stranger was greeted in an ominous silence, that recalled memories of Moorish cities where grave old Moslems would spit in their beards every time a European rode past their lairs.

Something has been said of one of the railways that serve Damascus, which is, in fact, the only considerable junction in Asiatic Turkey. Here is the terminus of three different lines. One, already mentioned, runs by way of Galilee to Haifa. A second, under French control, connects the city with Beyrouth. The third is the famous Hejaz Railway, which carries thousands of pilgrims to Medinah and Mecca, and which is not only a lasting monument to the engineering genius of Meissner, but also the one creditable asset of Izzet Pacha and his master with the Recording Angel, whose pen that enterprising

couple must have kept wet these twenty years. The French line to Beyrouth passes through beautiful scenery. Leaving the city amid green orchards, ablaze at Easter with pink and white blossom, and met by the deafening music of mountain torrents, it ascends into the hills of the Lebanon, halting at Rayah, the junction for Homs and Aleppo, cities which I was minded to visit, but which, for lack of time, I had regretfully to leave unseen. The best I could manage was to miss a train at Rayah, which just allowed time for a hurried visit to the mighty ruins of Baalbek, an ancient Akropolis, with a second-century Temple of Jupiter. Archæological snobs vote this a parvenu among ruins, but I thought it magnificent, and think it so still. Thank God for ignorance, where it means such bliss as enjoying the broken columns of Baalbek in a sunset shower.

Doubtless wonderful treasures will be brought to light at Baalbek as soon as some German syndicate or other has time to unearth them, for the proprietor of one of its very modest hotels took me into a gloomy cellar and proudly showed me a well-preserved marble lion, which, before it was left to moulder in honourable confinement in this hiding-place, lay buried in the earth of his kitchen garden. Baalbek has

A RAILWAY SCENE IN THE LEBANON.

A typical scene is here shown on the beautiful line between Damascus and Beyrouth, which is admirably conducted under French management. At these altitudes, within an hour or two of the seaport, to which the train descends rapidly, the journey is a cold one, and, even though the sun be fierce in Damascus, warm wraps will be found essential to comfort.

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its British Mission Schools. It is always with hesitation that I offer any comment on these well-meant efforts to educate the native, for I am quite sure that, however deplorable the result may sometimes be, with its inevitable product of a bastard race which apes civilisation, yet reverts to ju-ju at the first temptation, the ladies who devote their lives to such drab work are inspired by none but noble aims. I am glad, therefore, that such evidence as I feel bound to offer of the failure of their efforts at Baalbek will probably be flouted as imperfect and of little value; but, for all that, I cannot let it pass. The truth is, then, that I walked back to the railway station, in full view of the inhabitants, feeling a kind of Brigham Young. This modest allusion will perhaps be better appreciated if I explain that a young native girl aged about fourteen clung to each of my arms with a tenacity that nothing could shake off. "Me speak English!" was the burden of their song. And then they called me "dearest beautiful darling" (I quote their actual words), and pressed me with every endearment in their repertoire (no mean selection, considering their age) to give them a franc for twopennyworth of crochet work. For a young and pure-minded traveller, who has always been backward with

the other sex, such an encounter has its educational value, and indeed these mission maidens of Baalbek cured me once and for all of my nervousness with ladies. But I venture to suggest that those who have their spiritual development at heart might do well to restrain these displays of the higher education.

The trains on this line are narrow gauge, but otherwise very comfortable. After leaving Rayah, the line ascends to a considerable altitude in the hills, and the temperature falls so low that a rug or an overcoat will be found a boon. Yet although, on Good Friday, the snow lay heavy on the mountains behind Beyrouth, I sat in a garden eating ripe strawberries. Such is the climate of Syria.

Little need be said of Beyrouth. It is a busy port, and was a fervent partisan of the Austrian boycott, for its citizens fired on the officer of a vessel from Trieste when he went ashore for the mails. It is as dirty as it is busy, more muddy than even Constantinople, for it lacks the long and hilly streets which drain the capital. The pavement seems to be up at every few yards, not for repair, but for good and all. Yet, with the background of the Lebanon draped in snow, Beyrouth, seen from the grounds of the American College, makes a

ROAD OUTSIDE BEYROUTH.

This is a favourite ride from the Syrian port, and the avenue of tall firs imparts a striking resemblance to the roads round Bournemouth and other resorts in the south of Hampshire.

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pleasing picture. At that institution I was shown over a small but excellent museum, in which perhaps the most notable exhibit of local interest was a case of coneys, the "feeble folk" of Scripture, which have exercised so much of the ingenuity of commentators.

From these hills over Beyrouth the eye strains seaward for a glimpse of distant Cyprus. My own strained in vain. Either it was too misty, or I had not climbed high enough above the blue Mediterranean. I call it "blue" by courtesy, though the water of the Middle Sea is quite as often green, not to say grey, as tantalising in its chameleon changes as the lady's eyes that Swinburne loved to sing of. I was particularly anxious to see Cyprus from Beyrouth, if only to confirm a pretty fancy that I remembered reading in Professor Van Dyke's charming book, *The Opal Sea*, to the effect that the earliest navigators in history (excluding, of course, from the story of sea craft the mastodon refuge built by the Patriarch) were the men of Tyre, whom the peaks of Cyprus beckoned irresistibly to trust their frail craft to the most historic and not least treacherous of seas. As a matter of history, this attractive suggestion must be received with caution, for there is as good reason to assign the beginnings of navigation to the

coasts of Arabia, not to forget the vikings of the colder north, whose origin is wrapped in the sagas of mythology. Yet there is, no doubt, much to be said for the Mediterranean as the cradle of seamanship. From it—from this same neighbourhood of Beyrouth—came those astute Phœnician traders who carried the wares of the Levant as far as the shores of Britain; from it, too, Columbus and Magalhaens went forth to snatch the veil of doubt from the fabled lands in the sunset. The Mediterranean, with so many capes and islands for stepping-stones, was well calculated to lure those early adventurers from their homes beneath the snows of Lebanon, till, creeping along the shores of three continents, they came to the Pillars of Hercules. It was a grand school for seamen, since, though land-locked and owning little subjection to tides, it had all those capricious moods which sometimes make the narrow seas more terrible than the open ocean. Jonah, Paul, Ovid, and Æneas knew the dread of its storms. To this day the old lateen rig, recalling the days when Arabs ruled the waves, survives on this ancient sea, and is particularly conspicuous at its eastern end. Eyes accustomed to the wings that fold in northern harbours lack appreciation for the lateen sail, but its survival on the sea in which

perhaps it had its birth is the best proof of its fitness for the enduring calms and sudden squalls for which it was designed. And so, along with the Chinese junk and the *kayak* of the Esquimaux, it remains, and refuses to be ousted by newer models. The whole two thousand miles of the Mediterranean, from Gibraltar to Beyrouth, have long been a highway of commerce, with, here and there, an untrodden battlefield that has decided the fate of nations. Since the Suez Canal opened a new route to the East, the Syrian end of this wonderful sea is become something of a backwater, and the real ebb and flow of traffic ends west of Port Said. Up and down the Syrian coast, which has no harbour between Port Said and Beyrouth, the trade is mostly the transport of pilgrims and tourists, and with the building of the contemplated railroad from Port Said to Jaffa, which will bring the Holy City within a dozen hours of Cairo, the waters which once bore the men of Tyre on their daring westward forays will be more deserted even than they are to-day.

At Beyrouth, after a stay of a few days, I took leave of the Holy Land, embarking on the Khedivial Mail Company's *Hosseir*, a small but excellent boat (with an English captain, a rare privilege in those waters), and transhipping at

Jaffa to the *Ismailia*, a larger vessel of the same line. It had been my original intention to complete the tour of the coast, returning to Constantinople by way of Smyrna, and seeing something of Alexandretta and Mersina, but private advices from Stamboul hinted at grave events impending in the city, and for professional reasons I had to hurry back with the least possible delay. How these gloomy predictions were fulfilled is now a matter of history. I have told the story elsewhere.

When we reached Jaffa, an appalling sea was running, and for hours we rolled, in company with eight or ten other steamers (three-fourths of them flying the British flag), while the portmaster was making up his mind whether he would allow the shore-boats to come off. At length the wind abated somewhat, but transhipping to the other boat was not a picnic. There was a further delay in taking aboard some hundreds of trembling Copts and a seasick stork; but at length the anchors came in and we steamed away to Port Said, where I spent an hour or two ashore next day, realising with difficulty that this was the same town that I had known fourteen years earlier. The Occupation may not be to the taste of medical students who assassinate Government officials, but if it had only Port Said to its credit,

it would stand triumphantly vindicated before humanity.

Not until the sacred shores of Palestine had faded from view did I realise all that a sojourn in the Bible Land had meant. For all its drawbacks at the moment, Jerusalem reigns supreme in afterthoughts. It is still the Golden City, even though its gold be wrung from pilgrims and hoarded by Patriarchs. The dazzle of its tinsel may shock the quiet eye, yet its shrines are holy to the men of three creeds, and only a Hun could recall Mount Zion in the sunshine of Easter week without feeling strangely uplifted.

CHAPTER III

SPORT FOR THE SEA FISHERMAN

New Ways with Old Fish — Disappointment with Tunny and Swordfish—Heavy Bass—Difficulty of using the Rod—Care taken with Gut — Method of Baiting with Shrimps — Style of Bass Fishing—Night Fishing—Mr. Whittall's Knowledge of Local Bass—Ideal Conditions for Fishing—Sport in the Gulf of Ismidt — Dérinjé as Headquarters — Cost of Man, etc. — A Greek Gillie — Different Grounds in the Gulf — Bass in Winter—A Fisherman's Log.

For anyone who is fond of bass-fishing of better quality than can be enjoyed at home, the Gulf of Ismidt, which opens out of the Sea of Marmora, is the finest fishing ground that I know of. The angler, in visiting unfamiliar waters, hopes either to catch new fish, or to catch old fish by new methods, and there are bass and bream in plenty in those seas, as well as some kinds not found in more northern latitudes. As for the swordfish and tunny, though I would not readily discourage anyone who may contemplate trying to catch either, it is probable that most essays in that direction will bear Dead Sea Fruit. There are few spots where the amateur can find tuna in

such shallow water as at Santa Catalina Island, and, for some reason or other, these great fish visit that locality only at irregular intervals. One day, in the Sea of Marmora, I saw nine enormous tunas, the best of them weighing in all probability four hundredweight, taken in a net close to my boat. All next day I was after tuna with the proper tackle and bait, yet without getting a touch. Even if a fish had seized the bait, the end would probably have been tragedy, for the water was half as many fathoms again as there was line on my reel, and the tuna would only have had to dive in order to break the tackle. The swordfish is a more hopeful subject, for its tactics are different. It does not dive, but leaps out of water and then dashes at the boat. The difficulty is to find either when you are ready for it. I saw several of both during my stay in the country, but the tackle was never ready. I had therefore to watch the fish go past the boat with much the same chagrin as fills the heart of the photographer when he sees an ideal subject for his lens, only to remember that he has left his camera at home or used his last plate.

Kind friends predicted that I should have no luck with either of these fish, and they were right. What they did promise was better sport with bass and bream than could be enjoyed in English

waters. Here, also, they were right; though my own luck was all with the bass, a fish of which I had for many years made regular catches every season; whereas no big bream had pulled my line since I hauled my last schnapper off Sydney Heads fourteen years before.

The bass (*Labrax lupus*) of the Eastern Mediterranean is identical with our fish of that name, but it grows to a greater weight, or, at any rate, a greater average weight. A fish of over 20 lbs. is rare in English seas. I recollect one of 22½ lbs. being taken in a Devonshire seine some years ago, but the best fish I ever took on the rod in that county scaled just half that weight. In Turkey, on the other hand, I caught three of 17 lbs., with others of a pound or two less, and Mr. Edwin Whittall has caught them on the handline—a light line of horsehair and single gut, not the box-rope used at home—of 25 lbs. More than once I was broken by fish that must have been of that class; but I was fishing with tackle which handicapped me, for I would not use the line, but preferred my old sea-trout rod, and had to use this, which is but twelve feet long, with twenty-four feet of single salmon gut. This meant playing heavy fish with the gut on the reel during the last stages of the fight, and it also meant either the risk of the swivel catching in

the top ring, or the strain thrown on a spinning line by dispensing with the swivel altogether. Yet even with such drawbacks, even with the certainty of losing all the heaviest fish, and with the uncertainty of saving anything over ten pounds, I preferred the rod.

It looked at first as if so much single gut was unnecessary. In the clear rivers of Devonshire, the bass-fisherman need never fish with more than twelve feet, and in the thicker and more disturbed open sea, half that length is usually sufficient. The Whittalls assured me that it was indispensable, so I wrote home for casts, but determined to try whether less gut would not answer the same purpose. I did try. I came and saw, but did not conquer. Whittall, in another boat, was using 42 ft. of gut with his handline, and he struck five fish to my one. A little of such experimenting goes a long way when the fish are on the feed, and henceforth I also used the full cast. Whether the natural conditions of crystal-clear water and dazzling sunshine would of themselves make such deception necessary or not, is doubtful. I suspect the real difficulty of cajoling the bass by more rough-and-ready means is due to the fact that the professional fishermen, both Greek and Turk, have used the finest tackle for generations, and have thus accustomed the fish

to fight shy of coarser offerings. The care with which the fisherman of those seas keeps his gut lines would shame many a dry-fly man at home. Every morning before fishing he examines the gut inch by inch, searching for any flaw; nor would he dream of using it without first polishing it with a piece of chamois leather or a cigarette paper held between the thumb and first finger of the right hand, the gut being wound around the right knee to keep it taut. There can be no doubt that the gut so polished is all but invisible in bright water, and I intend to adopt the plan at home when the sun is shining. It must be first dried.

The hook used for bass by the Whittalls is a large one, and is baited with shrimps, or a small fish is used on a larger hook. The shrimps are the more important, and with them I caught all my bass, without exception. They are used alive, and strung in a peculiar manner on the hook. The photograph is unfortunately not a great success, but live shrimps are a difficult subject for the lens, and to have photographed them dead would have missed the peculiarly attractive appearance when they have just been kicking and have the legs still extended. The first is strung up the shank of the hook, tail first, the fan-shaped tail-fin being bitten off all of them to

BAITING WITH SHRIMPS AND CRABS.

The upper photograph was intended to illustrate the method of baiting for bass, as described in the text. Unfortunately, the photographer has put the top shrimp on the hook head first, whereas it should have been tail first. The crab bait, shown in the lower photograph, is used for the bream on the "baited rock."

[*Face p.* 118.

[*Face p.* 118.

prevent excessive spinning, or rather wobbling, in the water. The rest are then strung on, the point and barb of the hook being passed through their tails, and the heads all pointing the same way. This makes a tassel of shrimps, and from three to six are used, according to their size. Three large ones are more likely to take a big fish than six small; and what is of more importance than even their size, is that they should be lively. I call them "shrimps," by the way, out of regard for local custom, but they are really prawns. Fortunately, they are very plentiful along the shores of the Gulf of Ismidt, though the biggest are at times hard to find, and your fisherman, unless exhorted to net them only, is apt to be optimistic over the smaller sizes. The method of fishing is simple enough. Ten or fifteen fathoms of line are pulled off the reel and trailed astern, while the boat is rowed slowly over the best spots. These, in summer, are all in the shallows, so that the bass-fisherman has the novel experience of fighting his battles under the mild gaze of sheep and buffaloes, and amid a chorus of nightingales and frogs, so close is his boat to little orchards and patches of marshland. Every few seconds the bait must be sharply jerked by pulling in a fathom and letting go suddenly. This is easily done by raising the rod-top with a

flick and lowering it at once, but with the hand-line it necessitates a very tiring movement of the right arm, to which, however, the amateur soon grows accustomed. The object of this manœuvre is not merely to keep the shrimps awake and kicking, but to slacken the strain on them so that they can kick in comfort, a feat impossible so long as the line is stretched tight. It would look at first sight as if this method should lead to foul-hooking, but I had not a single case of it. Good bass are also taken at night (personally, I had no luck at such hours), and it is then necessary that the boat should move very slowly, and that the bait should trail quietly, without any jerking, for that would make sudden gleams in the phosphorescent water, and thus frighten these suspicious fish.

Having got thus far, anyone who has caught bass at home can catch them here, though it is another matter to acquire the intimate knowledge of their habits possessed by Mr. Edwin Whittall. I doubt whether, in all my somewhat varied acquaintance with sea-fishermen all over the world, I ever encountered a gentleman who, though deeply immersed in business during most of the year, has contrived to make so exhaustive a study of a particular fish. Winter and summer, night and day, fair weather and foul, he has

followed those bass under all conceivable conditions, and what he does not know about them now he has no need to know at all. The conditions of bass-fishing in those waters are very delightful, and I can cordially recommend the Gulf of Ismidt to my friends of the B.S.A.S. who have a fancy for large bass in calm water, and within four days' journey of London town. The water is so shallow and so free from tides or currents—I am speaking of the Gulf of Ismidt, not of the Bosphorus, where the bass-fishing is precarious work — that no lead whatever is necessary, in itself a comfort to those who use a light rod. The absence of tides also makes bass-fishing equally good all through the summer, and not, as at home, during alternate weeks only. (This does not apply to fishing for bream on the baited rock, described later, as that has its moons.) The Gulf is usually calm in the shallows. Weed is rarely present in such quantities as to spoil sport: on four days, in two months of fishing, I found it troublesome, but never prohibitive, as it too often is in the river at home. Small fish, it is true, and particularly small bass and a fish called *lufer*, are not wholly wanting to worry the hooks, but where is the angler free from these baby plagues? Unfortunately, a single nip out of one of the shrimps spoils

the action of the whole bunch, so that the bait has to be repaired at every nibble. Still, as there is no lead to haul, even this does not entail any serious fatigue. At any rate, the fisherman is troubled with neither sharks nor dogfish. As the bass grounds lie close to the shore, it is easy, when the fish are not on the feed, to run the boat alongside one or other of the little stages and smoke a cigarette in a meadow, watching the haymakers at their work, or plucking a handful of cherries or an artichoke or two from some deserted garden, where no one grudges you such simple spoils. Lastly, all the best fishing is from sunrise until eight or nine o'clock. Fortunately, the bass do not take this bait during the heat of the day, else enthusiasts, with but little time at their disposal, might be tempted to stay out and get sunstroke. At midday, they take only live bait. If anyone can enumerate conditions more delightful than the foregoing, I shall be happy to know where to spend my next holiday.

The best bass-fishing anywhere round Constantinople is undoubtedly to be found in the Gulf of Ismidt. Accommodation is not the easiest problem, and the few amateurs who go there for sport have their own yachts. At the same time, I managed to find all I required at Dérinjé, which is the station before Ismidt, on

the Bagdad Railway, officially the Chemin de Fer d'Anatolie. Dérinjé itself, which is described elsewhere, no longer affords the fishing that the Whittalls enjoyed there in former years, and its falling off in this respect may be attributed to the departure of its grain trade, which has gone to Haidar Pacha, the terminus of the line. The vessels used, no doubt, as elsewhere, to throw over quantities of waste food, and the bass are no longer groundbaited for in this way. A few very large fish, it is true, still congregate about the little pier, but nothing will induce them to take a bait, and indeed they always showed the same reluctance even in the days when fish were being caught not a hundred yards away. Yet, though no longer itself a likely spot, Dérinjé is undoubtedly the most central headquarters for reaching the best grounds in the neighbourhood.

Nearly all my own fish were taken at Solujak, a deserted cholera hospital about three miles to the eastward, close to Ismidt. With a view to starting operations before the sun was up over the mountains, I used to sleep on board my caïque. The caïque is a handy little boat, which can be rowed or sailed, and the cost of hire, with the fisherman thrown in, should be about thirty shillings a week. As this includes the man's whole services and bait, it is not exorbitant from

the sportsman's point of view. At the same time, the man has the whole day to himself, and the standard of living is not very high in those parts, so that no qualms need be felt. Indeed, it would be possible, with a little seeking, to find an excellent fisherman for considerably less, but that makes a business of what should be pleasure. Bargaining is not for holiday time.

My own fisherman, Nikko Yanni, a native of Pendik, was quite satisfactory *as a fisherman.* He knew his work, and was keen on getting the fish. Unfortunately, he was the Eighth Sleeper. Not the Fat Boy in *Pickwick* spent more hours looking at the inside of his own eyelids. It was I who had to wake him every morning, and he slept like the dead. Another little fault was a tendency to sulk, either when I had lost a good fish or when the fish would not bite. These little drawbacks, together with a mania for cigarette-smoking, which made him smell like a superannuated churchwarden pipe, need chronicling; but on the whole Master Nikko did his work properly, and when making up my bed for the night he was as careful as a ward nurse.

There were other grounds besides Solujak, though none treated me so well. There was Batakli (*i.e.* the swamp), on the south shore.

Here, with a deafening choir of frogs and a black stork for company, I hooked one or two heavy fish, but no more. Farther along the same shore of the Gulf, and opposite Dérinjé, which lies on the north shore, is a ground called Cazicli, from a number of posts standing in the shallow water. This also had a high reputation, but I did no good there. Farther west, also on the south shore, there are two deep-water grounds where good bass are caught. The first is the Chiflik (*i.e.* farm), where the coast takes a circular curve, and the bait is trailed in deep water close to the beach. Here I caught, at any rate, one ten-pounder, though the chief attraction were large gurnard. The other is Deirmenderé (*i.e.* valley of the mills), with deep water off a sloping beach. It is described in another chapter. On the north shore, a little west of Dérinjé, and, in fact, the next station on the line, is Tutun Chiflik (*i.e.* tobacco farm), but, though yielding great catches in other years, there was not a fish there at the time of my visit. The same may be said of Héréké, the site of the famous Government silk factory, though the lack of fish here was more easily explained, a gang of enterprising Armenians having raided the place with dynamite a few days before my arrival, carrying away a ton of fine bass without interference on the part of the

police. And they talk of the Armenian Atrocities! These are the grounds within reasonable distance of Dérinjé. Other bass grounds lie nearer the mouth of the Gulf, and of these the best is situated just inside the lighthouse on the south shore. I had no opportunity of trying it; but when we were guests on board Ahmed Ihsan Bey's yawl *Nesryn*, my friend Hulme Beaman kindly went off in the grey of the dawn with the only available small boat, and caught six or seven good fish in an hour or two.

My own fishing was all in summer, but the Whittalls catch some of their best fish when the snow lies thick on the ground, finding them at such times in the deeper water, under their own windows, in Moda Bay. Before Christmas, the bass stay in the bay three or four weeks at a time, but in January and February it is usually a case of here to-day and gone to-morrow.

The following extracts from a log kept during the summer of 1909 will perhaps give a better idea of the sport in those waters than any further general account. They are offered, with all necessary apology for the personal note inseparable from diaries, just as they were jotted down from day to day.

1. A Week-end of Spring Fishing in the Gulf.

April 29.—Left Moda on the *Abafna*[1] at 5 p.m. Steamed past the islands into the Gulf of Ismidt. Porpoises plentiful, the larger kind merely showing the back fin; the smaller leaping out of water. Small mackerel playing on the surface in millions, and saw the seines (locally called *grippe*) at work. Just before dinner, a small swordfish, probably about 40 lbs., passed under the yacht.

April 30.—On deck before 4. I took one boat and E. W. the other, and we fished at intervals until 10.30 p.m. without touching a fish of any kind! From a pier at Dérinjé, saw a bass of about 6 lbs. and a few smaller. This is not promising, but it is early yet. Saw a black stork, with red bill and legs, wading in the shallows, and W. tells me that a pair of these birds have bred for years on the other side. After sunset, a perfect serenade of jackals, owls, nightingales, and frogs. The jackal's bark is locally considered a sign of fine weather on the morrow. We hauled a trammel for *spari*, a little silvery bream which makes a good live bait for bass, and, in addition to a number of *spari*, we

[1] The late Sir William Whittall's steam-yacht.

caught weevers and two kinds of red mullet. The one is called *barbounia.* It has a curved profile and grows to a pound or two. The other, *tekir*, has a straight nose, and rarely exceeds half a pound. The *tekir* is found on sandy ground at all seasons; the *barbounia* seeks deeper water towards the end of summer, at which season the other usually disappears altogether. They are equally excellent for the table. Curiously enough, the very first fish to come up in the trammel was an "Ox-fish," or, as the Turks call it, *Ukus Baluk*, a curious creature of which Whittall had just been telling me. It is one of the stargazers, and is able to swallow half a dozen fish of nearly its own size. As it is by no means common in those waters, the coincidence was strange. I crammed five wrasse, each more than one-third its length, into its maw, and it swallowed them without effort, one after the other. Then set at liberty, it swam quietly away. Bass abnormally scarce here this season. Local gossip attributes this to two causes: (1) the unusually low temperature of the water, thanks to fourteen snowstorms last winter instead of the ordinary half a dozen; (2) the poisoning of fish by waste tobacco thrown into the sea hereabouts by the Régie. Even the rock-oysters, generally excellent and plentiful in April, were empty

Face p. 129.]

A "TALIAN."

These fixed nets are conspicuous on the shores of the Sea of Marmora. The name is obviously associated with Italy, and tradition assigns their origin to a Venetian, or Genoese, on whom a former Sultan conferred the monopoly of erecting them. It is even said that the old deeds are still in existence, but many have endeavoured to unearth them without success.

[*Face p.* 129.

and gaping, probably victims of the same poison.

May 1.—Fished at intervals from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Catching nothing at Dérinjé, we worked along the north shore towards Ismidt. W. had a talk with some Armenians who work a "talian" near Dérinjé. The "talian" is a fixed net, with a look-out man. It was originally a concession to some Venetian or Genoese in favour with the Sultan of the day, whose charter permitted him to make fast his net even to the gates of the Palace itself. Tradition assigns the first of these nets to eight hundred years ago (according to Whittall's Turkish fisherman), but, as there were no Sultans in Constantinople before the fifteenth century, the chronology is dubious. The Armenians brewed coffee for us and spoke promisingly of fat carp, or some such fish, in the stream behind their shed. We then fished eastward, and just before we reached Solujak, W. led off with a small bass of 3 lbs., which I trumped with one of 5 lbs. The deserted lazaretto of Solujak was at the time occupied by a regiment from Ismidt, posted there to search the trains and intercept fugitives from the mutinied regiments in the city. I presented my bass to the mess, and the Colonel invited us ashore and gave us coffee and pale tobacco. I doubt

whether it had paid duty, but that was their affair, not mine. The interview was interrupted by the arrival of a train from Constantinople, which they stopped and searched from end to end, without, however, making any arrests, though they had caught a number of deserters during the preceding week. After lunch we steamed across the Gulf to Chiflik, where W. caught a gurnard of 5 lbs. We fished Solujak again in the dark, but though large bass were rolling in the shallows, they would not take the bait properly. I struck and missed one good fish, and W. played a ten-pounder to the side of the boat and there lost it.

May 2.—Fished soon after dawn at Solujak, but the fish had disappeared. Then crossed the Gulf to Batakli, where W. caught one just under 10 lbs. Then we fished for an hour at Deirmenderé (W.'s object being to show me all the best spots, in view of my contemplated stay in these parts), but without success. The *Abafna* weighed anchor at one, and steamed out of the Gulf. Kenneth Whittall met me, as arranged, in his caïque at the little island of Juro, nowadays occupied only by Greek fishermen, who work a small "talian," but formerly monastic property, of which there are still evidences. Saw the "talian" emptied of several thousand small

mackerel called *chiri*, with a number of little blue-spotted fish called indiscriminately *Eurdek* (*i.e.* duck-fish), or *Sultan Mahmoud*, after one who prized it highly for the royal table. Fished for bream (here called *merjan*, or coral-fish) by moonlight, but caught none. Slept in the caïque, anchored under the lee of the island.

May 3.—Up at daybreak, and we fished various bream grounds, using pale-red horsehair lines and *zokka* hooks baited with shrimps. The *zokka* is a hook with a kidney-shaped lead soldered on the shank, and the fishermen are careful to keep the lead highly polished with quicksilver. Breakfast on the shore of another island called *Haïrsis* (*i.e.* good for nothing), on which stood two hoopoes and a company of jackdaws, one of which stood sentry over a hole in the cliff into which the rest disappeared. We only caught half a dozen bream apiece, and none over 2 lbs. We also caught large wrasse and rock-cod, which presently made a very commendable fish-soup. The "talian" men caught a small swordfish, which I put down at about 50 lbs. They tell me that the swordfish, however large, give up without a struggle once they are in the net. This does not promise sport on the rod, but is better for the owner of the nets. A squall of rain and thunder passed over the island at

four, but the weather cleared and we embarked for the fishing-grounds, only to be driven on the opposite coast by a second squall, in which the boats all but foundered.

May 4.—After an early breakfast, fished for two or three hours without success. The *Abafna* hove in sight about 11.30, and Kenneth W. went aboard, I returning to the city by the afternoon boat from Pendik. A son of the new Sultan was on board, a simple-looking young man with very quiet clothes. At Cartal, some troops brought on five recaptured deserters and two *hojas*, the latter, I was told, destined for the rope.

2. Six Weeks at Dérinjé.

May 14.—Arrived at D., 6 p.m. Tried for a bass in an hour of twilight, but without success. Nikko and Panayot (my second boatman *pro tem.*) met the train and made themselves useful.

May 15.—Very cold weather, but was out by five. Tried shrimp for three hours round D., but not a bite. Then with live *spari* from the quay, a favourite method of W.'s, with the same result. In the evening fished for two or three hours at Solujak :. not a fish. One of the lieu tenants, whom I had met there a fortnight earlier,

hailed me from the little pier with "*Soyez le bienvenu!*" so I ran ashore for a chat, but found that that was the extent of his French. His brother officers talked only Turkish. But the coffee was good. Again saw the black stork. Herons very plentiful, but no gulls. Nightingales in every thicket, and cuckoos calling in the hills. The *reis* (captain) of the Armenians recognised me and shouted a gibberish of welcome.

May 16.—Again on the water at five. Crossed to Batakli, where had a tremendous run, but lost the fish. This at once convinced my impressionable Greeks that I was an ass and the rod a fraud, and I believe that the episode was the cause of Panayot pleading illness and returning home by the evening train. Fished at Batakli again from 4 to 8 p.m., and did not touch a fish. A very large old otter rose suddenly alongside the boat and stared at me before diving. The local folks declare that it is a fortnight too early for the fish. I hope that this is the explanation.

May 17.—With a nice sailing breeze, I sailed at five over to the Chiflik ground, and there caught one large weever! Moved on to Deirmenderé, and there caught three more. Went ashore at Deirmenderé and drank superb coffee brewed by an Arab, and also bought four lobsters

for six shillings, one, an enormous brute, with a grown man's meal in each claw. Presented one to the stationmaster, a genial Levantine Italian, who took me after lunch to the ruined kiosk once the property of the Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz.[1] It contains a quantity of decayed modern furniture, reminiscent of Paris Exhibitions, brightly-coloured painted ceilings, marble baths, and a French piano which has not been touched these thirty years. Out of that slumbering instrument I wrung such music as made the octogenarian caretaker dance with excitement. The nightingales are very talkative at night, and owls hoot and jackals howl. I also heard the sinister note of a mosquito, but was not attacked. Still, I took some quinine.

May 18.—Another day of failure. Fished from 5 to 8 a.m. off Batakli, without a sign of a fish. In the afternoon, tried from the quay with live bait, a wrasse and a *spari*, but met with no response.

May 19.—At last, a hit. The day started badly, for at Solujak I hooked a fine bass and played it to the boat. It must have weighed

[1] Three months later I had the honour of meeting Prince Mejid, son of that unhappy monarch, and found that, thanks to the long imprisonment which, under Hamid, was the lot of all the royal princes, he was not even aware of the existence of this kiosk. He was much interested in it, and proposed an early visit.

between 15 and 20 lbs. Nikko—who wanted to rub it in, when, as presently happened, the hook came away—swore that it was 22 lbs. Then he sent me to Coventry for an hour. The fact that I soon caught three smaller fish only made him still more glum. Somehow, catching a little fish after losing a heavy one does add insult to injury. Then I killed a fish of 10 lbs. (just over $3\frac{1}{2}$ okes on my steelyard), and restored him to such good humour that on the way home he gave me a lesson in Greek and Turkish, and I wrote the following useful vocabulary on the back of a Régie cigarette box:—

	G.	T.		G.	T.
Near	*koda*	*yakïn*	That	*aftó*	*bounou*
Far	*makrÍa*	*oozak*	Presently	*ístera*	*sóra*
Big	*megálo*	*beyuk*	Yes	*na*	*évet*
Small	*mikró*	*kutchuk*	All right	*malesta* / *kala*	*pécki*
Here	*hedó*	*bourdá*			
There	*échi*	*ordá*	No	*oíche*	*yok*
Now	*tóra*	*síndi*	Enough	*ftan*	*bitti*
Many	*polá*	*tchok*	Thank you	*cáristo*	*evállah*
Few	*liga*	*az*	This evening	*tovrádi*	*aksám*
To-day	*símera*	*buyun*	What is it?	*oríste?*	*buyurun?*
To-morrow	*ávrio*	*yarïn*	Nothing	*tÍpota*	*bische yok*

[I have given these, not to show my diligence, but because they should be of use to Englishmen adrift with a Greek or Turkish fisherman. I imagine that the orthography is eccentric, but they are written as pronounced, which is the practical need of the moment.

While on the subject, let me add, for the benefit of the angler, that a hook is *angistri* in Greek, and *inné* in Turkish; a fishing-line is *volta* in Greek and Turkish; a fathom, *oria* in Greek; and gut, in both languages, *beden*; also *mersina* (Gr.).

Nikko assured me that a bass of 10 lbs. would be worth half a sovereign at Constantinople, so I promised him the next fish for himself. In the afternoon I walked in the hills and found a profusion of wild flowers, some as tall as hollyhocks, and others like wild sweet peas. Also saw a slowworm, two large tortoises, a stork, several lizards (hence the stork), and a bloated trapdoor spider, which vanished underground before I could secure it.

May 20.—Oh, the caprice of the bass! This morning at five, fished all over yesterday's ground without seeing or feeling a fish. Took the morning train to Ismidt for provisions, and, walking through the fishmarket, found that the *cephali*, which are always jumping round the boat, are grey mullet. In the evening there was half a gale, so caught small fish from the quay.

May 21.—Water too thick after yesterday's blow, with the result that I fished for two hours at Solujak without a bite. Then went to the

"talian" and took coffee with the Armenians. Lunched on *spari* which I caught on the quay.

May 22.—Again a blank. Fished both Solujak and Batakli from 5 to 9, without a touch. In the evening, fished two hours off Dérinjé, with the same result.

May 23.—Tried Chiflik from 6 to 9 a.m. Not a fish. In the afternoon took the fly-rod to the stream behind the "talian," and caught three or four small fish like roach. Water-tortoises very numerous, and yellow iris growing in profusion on the banks.

May 24.—Fished for two hours, from 5 to 8 a.m., at Solujak, without a bite. Saw a great shoal of *palamit* (mackerel) of about 3 lbs. playing on the surface. Put a Wilson spinner among them, and the "schoolmaster," probably a stray *torik* of 10 lbs. or so, took it away with him. In the evening sailed over to Deirmenderé and drank coffee with my Arab.

May 25.—As usual, out at five. Sailed to Deirmenderé, and drank coffee while a man was gathering me a clothes-basketful of ripe cherries for a franc. Then rowed along the south shore to Chiflik, netting prawns, pipefish, and blennies as the boat passed slowly over the long weed, and in the Chiflik inlet caught a game bass of over 9 lbs. The water is warming daily.

Turbaned labourers are at work in the hayfields opposite my window. Summer is coming at last.

May 26.—But not the bass. Fished early at Solujak and late at Dérinjé, without getting a fish, though an enormous fellow rose close to the boat at the latter place. Fished in the moonlight for *sargos* from the quay. The *sargos* are black bream, which feed only at night. It is apparently necessary to attract them with a very foul groundbait, compounded of stale cheese, staler fish, and other ingredients of equal beastliness, brewed in a cold soup, which is baled out as gingerly as if it were Imperial Tokay. It is also necessary to keep perfectly silent, and even the gleam of an after-dinner cigar is considered fatal to sport. On the whole, the game is not worth the candle.

May 27.—As I was fishing for *sargos* until past midnight, I was not on the water until six. Lost a good fish at Chiflik, and caught a small one. Went ashore while Nikko waded for shrimps, and disturbed some nesting dotterels and my friend the black stork. Sent Nikko into Ismidt for tooth-powder, and he came back in triumph with insect-powder. I attribute the error to my imperfect command of Greek. I prefer so to account for it.

May 28.—Kenrick Whittall came by the evening train to stay over Whitsuntide. Perhaps the expert will show me how to catch the bass, for I failed again this morning.

May 29.—He did. I left Solujak to him, as the most likely ground for his short stay, and he promptly came back with four beautiful fish, the best of them about 10 lbs. I fished at Chiflik and caught nothing. There saw an enormous gurnard, which tried to tempt with a shrimp, but it merely unfolded its great blue wings and sailed slowly away into deeper water. Nikko is a great artist with wounded fish. Last evening he netted a palamit of about 3 lbs., and this evening he got a bass of 12 lbs. It was floating dead on the surface, but was perfectly fresh, as *rigor* had not even set in. Possibly it had been struck and missed by a porpoise, though these do not usually hunt in the shallow water where bass are found.

May 30.—K. W. preferred to try the south shore, so I fished at Solujak. Our joint bag was nothing at all. Owing to bad weather we did not fish in the evening, but looked on at a Whitsuntide dance of locals at the hotel, in the course of which he told me that the Greek for "wall-flowers" (*i.e.* at a dance) is *media*, or mussels, an excellent word.

May 31.—I was out at five, but it was blowing

so hard that I thought the water would be too thick. K. W., however, who had slept in his boat, was away on the Solujak ground, where he caught a very pretty bass of 14 lbs. Then he found the water too thick for further fishing. He returned to the city in the afternoon.

June 1.—Spent the day at Héréké, visiting the silk factory, for which Noury Bey sent me a permit.

June 2.—Fished at Solujak 6 to 9, and caught a large *sargos* and a gurnard, but no bass. A small swordfish, about 4 feet long, jumped out of the water close to my boat.

June 3.—Was on the Solujak ground before five, and hooked, and played for at least a quarter of an hour, a magnificent bass of, I should think, 18 lbs. Then the wretched swivel (the smallest I dared use) hitched in the top ring, and the bass carried away six yards of Marana gut, for a duplicate of which I at once cabled Alnwick. Caught the morning train to Lake Sabanja, where I am spending a couple of days. The train stops at Buyuk Derbend, where are the Circassians to whom I have a letter from Edwin Whittall, but I went on to Sabanja, intending to see the Circassians to-morrow. Sabanja is a pretty village peopled with Lazes and Armenians, with gardens full of mulberry and other fruit trees. Engaged

a Greek boatman, and he took me across the lake to his native hamlet of Esmé, on the north shore. The Greek and Turkish quarters of Esmé are separated only by a field, but are socially as far apart as the poles. My Greek took me up to a field of his own, sat me under a cherry tree, and flung down ripe fruit by the pound. Then he took me out in the boat. I had hoped to catch a jack, a perch, or a wels, having seen all three in the village, but caught only one fish like a roach, a curious fish to take a live minnow. Then we walked through the Turkish quarter, where I saw an old mill, and a child so beautiful that she would have made Burne Jones rave. The Greek put me up in his house, and I nearly lay me down on a tray of silkworms, for they give up their best rooms to these profitable insects all the summer, and in the half light I did not see them. Slept in an outer room, with no silkworms, but with other insects that do not figure in the industrial assets of Turkey.

June 4.—Up very early (and no wonder !), and fished on the lake from five to eleven, when it was too hot ; besides which, I wanted to catch the midday train back to Dérinjé, the memories of yesterday's bass proving too alluring to prolong my stay on the lake. Moreover, the sport was not of a high order, and the fish would need

closer study than I was minded to give them. The local men fish with seines, spears (for the wels), and fishtraps. My host gave me a parcel of excellent crayfish from the lake. Saw a black stork, but no herons. Sent a man to Buyuk Derbend to find Hassan Chaoush, to whom I had the letter. Hassan, a lithe little Caucasian, came bounding along like a roe. Neither he nor I could read one word of the letter, which was subsequently translated for him by a scholar at the station. Meanwhile he took me on trust, having evidently a profound respect for E. W. He even speared a wels of about 8 lbs. and presented it to me. Returned to Dérinjé in the afternoon and slept on board the caïque, so as to fish at daybreak. Money goes far in this land. My Greek—would that I remembered his name, for he is the most honest Greek I ever knew—gave me the use of his boat for many hours, a night's lodging, two meals, and provisions in the boat, and he carried my bag five miles to the nearest station, and for all this he asked half a sovereign!

June 5.—Here begins my success with the bass. It was time! During three weeks I have caught two sizeable fish and lost four, that of two days ago with more than its own value in tackle. To-day things went differently, for I missed only

one bass, and came back with a brace of 17 and 15½ lbs., each of them heavier than any I ever caught before in my life. It was delightful to watch the great full moon go down behind the mountains of Anatolia. When the day broke I saw another boat anchored close alongside, and from this next moment a tall Armenian suddenly stood up, waving the folds of his black cloak like the wings of some great waking bat. A snake, which looked about 4 feet long, swam close to my boat, with several inches of the neck and body erect out of water.

June 6.—Took a brace of 11 lbs. 5 oz. and 9 lbs. 14 oz., as well as two of small size. Went ashore at Solujak while Nikko caught more shrimps, and cut some small artichokes for dinner. Removed the swivel from the line. It throws a greater strain on the gut, but lessens the risk of breakage.

June 7.—Caught only one fish, another bass of 17 lbs., with an adventure unique in my varied experiences of gillies. It was a very powerful fish indeed, and I had played it, mostly with the gut on the rod, for nearly half an hour. I dared not hurry matters, as the gut had borne the strain of over 50 lbs. of bass in the last two mornings. Then it sulked in the long grass and would not move. There it lay, plainly gleaming in the sun-

light, in not more than 5 feet of water. Nikko made a thrust with the landing net, and this moved the fish, which tore away at top speed. Again I got it close to the boat, when it suddenly made a dash under the keel. To my horror the gut below the rod-top went slack, and I naturally concluded that the fish had broken away. Yet no! There it lay in the grass again, and Nikko, who knew the little foibles of his aged boat, at once concluded that it had taken a turn of the gut round a nail in the keel. A single wrench on the part of the exhausted fish must have broken the gut; but it hesitated a second too long, for, to my amazement, my Greek, seizing the net, leapt overboard, clothes and all, and got the net under the prize. Needless to say, I gave him the fish to sell, as he had done quite as much to catch it as I. On the way home, saw garfish and gurnards leaping out of the water.

June 8.—Gave Solujak a rest and tried Chiflik, where caught a gurnard of close on 8 lbs. and tried in vain to spear two great lobsters which we saw in the long weed.

June 9.—Solujak gave *me* a rest. I did not sleep there and arrived too late, so fished four times over the ground without a touch.

June 10.—Again gave Solujak a wide berth and tried at Tutun Chiflik, without result; then sailed

across to Deirmenderé for coffee and cherries, and failed to find a fish at Chiflik. In the evening, again fished for *sargos* at Dérinjé, but this time the *sargos* were not at home. Sailed at midnight for Solujak.

June 11.—Another failure, for though I was fishing actually before the day broke, after only two hours of sleep, the big fish were not on the feed. After catching one small insult, I went ashore and walked back to Dérinjé. Again fished for *sargos* in the evening, as Nikko was anxious to use up the rest of his witch's brew, and I was no less eager to be rid of it. Anchored for the night off Dérinjé, so as to give the home waters a trial at dawn.

June 12.—The trial was mutual, for, as usual on this ground, I did not touch a fish. Caught a few *spari* from the jetty for lunch. A score of bass and *sargos* swam round my bait in a circle, but would not look at it. After dinner fished in pitch darkness most of the way to Solujak, but caught nothing.

June 13.—At it before four. Touched a monster; from the sheer weight he may have been a 25-pounder. But the tip of the hook just lodged in the bony plates of the jaw and came away. Caught only one small bass and a large *lufer*, a favourite fish with amateurs later in the year. It

is in appearance not unlike a small bass out of drawing, and the best time to catch it is between August and Christmas, for an hour before sunset.

Mr. Cumberbatch, of H.B.M. Consulate, enjoys excellent sport with *lufer*, using very fine gut, and baiting with a little fish known as a *stavrit*. His best fish run about 2 lbs., and give good sport on the light tackle.

A small stingray swam gracefully past the boat on the way home. Passed the Armenian *reis*, and bought his best lobster for two francs. It would have cost five shillings in Bond Street.

June 14.—A great gale blew from the west, a good quarter for fishing ; but you can have too much of a good wind. Nikko calls this particular breeze *fortuna*, a name devised in all probability by Greek sailors in the blistering Mediterranean summer, when calm weather means hours of honest sweat at the long oars.

June 15.—The gale increased in intensity, whitening the gulf with foam. It fell calm in the evening, so slept on board the boat.

June 16.—Within ten minutes of starting at Solujak canght a lively fish of 12 lbs., which gave me more play than any of my heavier fish, and christened a new cast just received from Alnwick. Caught three smaller bass, and then the rain came down solid, with thunder and lightning,

from which I took refuge with the Armenian fishermen. Small *lufer* were playing on the water in thousands during the storm.

June 17.—Slept once more off Solujak and fished from 3.30 to 8 without a run. The conditions were unfavourable, as there was a cold breeze from the S.E., and the water was very thick. Saw a red gurnard of about 2 lbs. chasing small fry at the surface, the first time in my life I ever saw a gurnard behave in this fashion. For the first time, last evening, a few mosquitoes tried to take up their quarters in my room at the hotel. I managed to kill seven, and the rest hid. I do not unreasonably object to them dropping in for a snack whenever I light the lamp without closing the window, but this try on at board and residence is altogether outstaying their welcome.

June 18.—Slept at the hotel, but was on the water by 4.30. Preferring to give Solujak a rest after yesterday's failure, I tried Batakli, but there was no sign of a fish, the only interesting object being the antics of six pelicans, the first I have seen hereabouts. In the afternoon sailed over to Deirmenderé to see Ihsan Bey, editor of the *Servet-i-Funoun*, but his yacht just cleared as I was half-way across. Again slept ashore.

June 19.—Was down at the water's edge by

four, but found the sky threatening, and so gave it up.

June 20.—Was fishing at Solujak by 3.15, but got only a single bass of 1 lb., which, curiously enough, felt quite warm to the touch, a sensation which, Nikko tells me, is not unusual on days when the wind blows cold. After all, temperature is only comparative.

June 21.—Fished at Solujak as usual, and caught a very fine fish of 17 lbs., which I had to play close to the boat, with the gut on the reel, for probably twenty minutes. This class of fish, which takes the steelyard down a little below the 6-oke mark (1 oke is equivalent to 2·82 lbs.), and which I therefore put down at 17 lbs., seems to be not uncommon on that ground, as this is my third of exactly that weight. My failure of yesterday I attributed to the cold wind from the east, but to-day it blew from the same quarter. The real difference was that to-day I was using large shrimps, freshly caught, whereas yesterday's bait was small, and had been in the sunken bag alongside the caïque for two days. Struck and missed another fish of about the same size, as I saw it plainly. Five wild duck, mallard I think, flew close over the boat, and I saw six black-headed terns, the first of those seashore fairies that I have seen in the country.

June 22.—Slept in the boat last night, the shortest of the year, and better so, for it was bitterly cold, with the wind still in the east. Fished from 3.15 until 7.30, but only small fish were on the move. Went ashore at Solujak and, in the old garden, netted a brace of newts for Boulenger, who is as receptive of newts as a schoolgirl of chocolates. On my way down to the caïque this evening, walked into a great swarm of gigantic "June-bugs," about three times the size of those which frighten the women at home. Knocked one down, merely stunning it, and put it away in a large matchbox to examine at leisure. A little later, it gave me a start by squeaking like a baby mouse. The sensation of hearing an unexpected top A proceed from the depths of your pocket on a moonlight night is a ghostly one.

June 23.—Lost a tremendous fish at 3.30 this morning. I was hardly awake, but the fish was, and it took away the hook and a fathom of gut. And how? I will not spare myself. I had allowed the line to get round the handles of the reel! In the afternoon paid a visit to the Protestant Armenian village of Baktchéjik (*i.e.* little garden) on the south shore, and took tea with Dr. Chambers at the Mission. What a strange enclave of zeal in those green hills. The

mission, nominally American, is conducted by Canadians under the British flag.

June 24.—As Nikko had a long pull back from Baktchéjik, I gave him a rest to-day, merely sailing over to Chiflik for a futile essay. This evening I fished in the moonlight, without result, and slept at Solujak.

June 25.—Awoke in a blazing sunrise at 3.15. The conditions were ideal, and every moment, for two hours, I expected the reel to scream. It did not, and the tension grew so unbearable that I screamed myself, and when the Ismidt clock boomed the Turkish equivalent of 6.30, and I had caught only a 3 lbs. bass and a baby *lufer*, I went ashore and walked home along the line, a four-mile jaunt, for the exercise, which, at this season, is only bearable before 7 a.m.

June 26.—And so good-bye Solujak, a regretful leave-taking, though it has not been kind to me of late, and to-day was again a blank. Took leave of my Armenian fishermen, and bought a great lobster of the *reis* for the boat to-morrow, as I have to provision for three days. Then photographed him and his knaves, who are also bound for Pendik in ten days' time for the seine fishing. Then the "talian" will be packed away at Ismidt, and the shed, where I have so often drunk coffee and smoked in their company, will be deserted.

3. Back to the Marmora and the Baited Rock.

June 27.—Left Dérinjé in the caïque at 8 a.m., and sailed over towards Deirmenderé, but made the first halt at the Greek village of Ghonja, where, as it was Sunday, the élite were drinking coffee or *mastic* and playing cards in every vine-covered café on the waterside. Then had the boat beached a mile to the westward, and lunched on lobster, young chicken, and roseleaf jam. Lay down on the beach for a boa-constrictor sleep, and was all but ridden over by four Turks in a hurry (probably fleeing from justice), my two Greeks having, with great presence of mind, retired to a distance and averted their faces. Anchored for the night off Héréké, which has a good reputation for bass.

June 28.—The wind got up in the night and made my little home rock so violently that it was no self-denial to be up before the sun and wake the knaves. I fished without success as far as the little stage, where a despondent Greek informed us that a party of atrocious Armenians had raided the place with dynamite cartridges three days ago, and had left with a boatload of bass before the local *zaptieh* (policeman) could pull his boots on! Needing modest fare for the new day, I sent

one of the Greeks ashore for milk and eggs, and, as such words had not hitherto entered into our vocabulary, I had to make him understand what I required by unsophisticated imitations of farmyard language, clucking for the eggs and mooing for the milk, the latter with a meaning repetition that sternly inhibited the product of the oily ewe or fetid goat. A small crowd, chiefly composed of little girls on their way to work at the silk factory, gathered round me, and I began to wish that I had drawn the things, as I so often did when at a loss for a word. Still, though the eggs would have presented no difficulty even to my untaught pencil, the milk would have bothered me unless I could have managed a cow. The pessimistic Greek took in the situation far better than my own fools, for he took an empty whisky bottle from the caïque, strode up the hill and into it milked part of a cow. He also brought back some eatable cherries and impossible plums, which the struthious gizzards of Nikko and Panayot (a cousin of the deserter of May, who was still "ill") made short work of. Pushed on *velis remisque* to Darijeh, and lunched beneath a spreading fig tree in sight of the tomb of Hannibal, who here committed suicide. I forget why, but he might have chosen a worse spot. The lunch was not good, and whenever I tried to

sleep, a thousand ants mistook me for Gulliver and examined my person with a thoroughness which made the Biblical injunction about going to the ant superfluous. The ants came to the sluggard. At sunset, sailed out of the Gulf, bidding it reluctant farewell over a cup of coffee at Arezzu, and anchored for the night off Touzla. Just before journey's ending, in a gloaming that was momentarily fading, was overhauled by the Régie gig on the look-out for smuggled tobacco. The *reis* shouted out to me to have the boat stopped; and stop I did, chaffing him and insisting on his taking a cigarette, that his quest might not be vain. I gave him my word of honour that there was no tobacco in the boat. With a deprecatory gesture he sent one of his men aboard, nearly upsetting us, to search. I noticed that Nikko did not second my invitation that the search might be thorough, but attributed his sulky demeanour to the inevitable hostility between the revenue men and everyone else afloat. What I had not anticipated was the information, as soon as the search was over and the gig at a safe distance, that the ruffian had three okes of the best hidden away under my seat! At Touzla, just as it had fallen dark, saw a pretty brawl in a waterside coffee-house.

June 29.—I was up a little after the sun, so

caught nothing. I suspect that, for all Nikko says to the contrary, it is here, as in the gulf, a case of fish at daybreak or never. Indeed, from the disturbance of these waters, I imagine *never* to be nearer the mark. By noon we came to Pendik, a little village of the Marmora, and also on the Bagdad Railway, with the single distinction of being the birthplace of Nikko. I know of no other city which has disputed the claim. It is near Pendik that old Yanni, Nikko's father, baits his celebrated rock for bream, putting down bushels of crabs every day throughout the summer, and catching a few really heavy fish for his pains, though drawing more blanks than otherwise.

June 30.—I fished on the famous rock last night. It is necessary to leave Pendik in daylight, as the exact bearings (and they must be exact) are difficult to pick up. Having located the rock, Yanni, a very Caliban of the Levant, throws over an old petroleum tin as a buoy to mark the spot, and then rows around, or rather lets his man do so, until the moon is up. This fishing succeeds only with a moon, and the first moon of July is perhaps the best of the year—in theory. When the moon is up, fishing begins, and may last through the night. Horsehair lines are used, with an immense *zokka* hook baited with mutilated crabs (see photograph at page 118), and the bait

must just rest on the bottom and must lie perfectly still. The boat is not anchored, but is kept on the spot by the boatman, who has to know his business thoroughly. The first nibble is not to be noticed. Personally, I never got even as far as a first nibble; but, if it came, I was to disregard it, only striking with a will the moment I could feel the big bream stealing away with the hook. In other words, the *merjan* of the Marmora is practically the same thing as the schnapper of Sydney. Well, I left Pendik this evening at 6 and fished the rock till midnight, neither Yanni nor myself getting a touch.

July 1.—I have put my luggage in a room of the only hotel here, but the "free list" is so appalling that I dare not even lie down for an hour's siesta. To-day I ran up to the city to see Hulme Beaman, who is out here for a holiday. Went, as arranged, to the baited rock, but there was no sign of Yanni, whom we presently found asleep in his boat under the quay. He vowed that he never meant fishing it to-night! As I did not want the lens of my camera eaten, I transferred my property to the Hotel Giacomo at Prinkipo. Even that high-class establishment has its "deadheads" in the bedrooms, but they are less in evidence than on the mainland.

July 2.—Tried for bass off Pendik, and caught

a *lufer* of ¾ lb. These closing days of my cruise are giving me more of fishing than fish. At 7 p.m. to the rock. Sat there for four hours without a touch. At midnight, Yanni, with whom I converse in an Italian that would make the ruins of Reggio rise again, suggested that the game was up. Having done which, and seeing me turn in while my men rowed me back to land, he promptly played that same game an hour longer, and caught a brace of *merjan* weighing 14 lbs. and 9 lbs. Nice, reliable gillie, that!

July 3.—At 4 a.m., as I lay dozing in my boat, his wrinkled face bent over me, and he dangled his wretched fish for my edification. Now, at no time should I choose a visage like Yanni's as the soothing image on which to open my eyes after a brief night's rest, but the sight of these two fine fish, which he had caught after sending me home, moved me to give him a little Leghorn backslang, a mere sketch of what I could have managed eighteen years earlier. Then, as the sweetest revenge, I photographed him. Beaman turned up at four in the afternoon, and two hours later we repaired in our respective caïques to the rock. A glorious moon was sailing in the east by 8.30, but a beastly north wind was up even earlier, so ruining the fishing that we sat on until nearly 3 a.m. without a touch! If this sort of night-

fishing is pleasure, then give me an armchair in the library!

July 4.—Ran in for the night under the lee of an uninhabited island, where we set up a fine commotion among about a thousand gulls. Up again at six, and tried to catch bass, without success. Then, as the finale to this most luckless week, broke my old bass-rod, faithful companion of six summers, which left its rack in Jermyn Street to kill scores of fish in two continents, only to end, not, as it would have wished, in battle, but at the careless hands of the owner it had served so well. The sun had dried its sap during seven weeks of exposure, and a sudden flick, to disengage a loop of line from the top ring, finished it. This ended my attempted fishing in the Marmora, for I had by now come to the conclusion that the high reputation which Nikko (anxious to get away from Dérinjé) had given it was just a fable of the Greeks. I amused myself for an hour, after breakfasting on a little beach, chasing water-snakes and baby turbot in the shallows, and then sailed to Prinkipo, where, if fishing is to be denied me, I shall at least eat something. And if I muse a little lovingly on the otto of surmullets' livers or the bloom on iced caviare, the frugal fare of the past two months should excuse it. I, too, do not mind roughing it for sport, but when there

is no sport, the desire for discomfort also leaves me.

July 8.—Received a sudden invitation from Ahmed Ihsan Bey (of the *Servet-i-Funoun and Ittihad*) to spend a day or two on his yacht *Nesryn* (*i.e.* White Rose), formerly the *Pourquoi Pas* [?] of Bordeaux. Was aboard, with Beaman and the Bey, at six, and we sailed for the Gulf, towing old Yanni, with fresh shrimps, in his caïque. Going top speed, with a spanking breeze behind, we ran fair and square on the sandbank off Dil Bornou (*Bornou* is a cape) at two in the morning.

July 9.—And here we stuck fast, in a dead calm and a baking sun, until midday, when the Régie steamer towed us free. Meanwhile Beaman had vanished in Yanni's caïque, and presently returned with some bass. Reached Deirmenderé by three, and sat for an hour or two in Ihsan's garden. Then shot his trammels and caught red mullet for dinner.

July 10.—Up at 1.30 a.m. for a last unexpected glimpse of Solujak. One should never revisit the old battlefields. If Wellington had gone a second time to try his luck at Waterloo, the *sauve qui peut* might have been *his* game. Disillusion is the price of such fond folly, and I reaped full measure this morning, for I neither touched nor

saw a bass, catching only, as once before, a large *sargos* and a *lufer*. Beaman, on the other hand, snatching three hours' more sleep, got only as far as the spot until lately occupied by the "talian," and there first caught a bass of 8 lbs. and was then broken by something immense. We were under way again in the evening, and anchored for the night a little west of Héréké.

July 11.—Fished early for bass, but neither Beaman nor I had a bite. We had to lie off Darijeh for four hours waiting for the wind; but the time passed pleasantly as I listened to Ihsan's stories of the inner history of the July Revolution, of which he should know as much as most men.

July 12.—A sight this afternoon which maddened me. Having sailed over in the caïque to photograph the "talian" at Cartal, which proved a fruitless outing, as the sea was too lumpy, I was just in time to see nine magnificent tunny, the largest of which could not have weighed far short of 400 lbs., slain by the Greeks, who drove great bale-hooks into the mighty fish, and hauled them, with a terrific struggle, into their boat. I was so close as to be splashed with the blood-stained foam, and of course I returned post haste to Prinkipo to put my tarpon tackle together.

July 13.—It was like old times, paying two francs for three mullet, and sitting in a hot sun

over thirty-three fathoms of water, gripping the American butt in the leather rest. Beyond this it did not go, for I sat grilling for hours without the sign of a fish. To have caught my only tunny within two days of leaving would have been a stroke of luck too wonderful to expect. And so, somewhat tamely, ends my fishing round the Marmora.

While these pages were going through the press, I had occasion to relate a few of my bass-fishing experiences in Turkish waters to some members of the British Sea Anglers' Society. At the conclusion of my remarks I was engaged, as usual, with abundance of questions. Why use so much single gut? Why polish it? Why this? Why that? I trust that answers to these and other questions may be found in the foregoing chapter. It is never very easy to convince sportsmen at home of the need of certain devices under the wholly different conditions of other lands. The fierce sun, cloudless sky, and clear water of the coasts of Asia Minor are a combination unfavourable to the arts of the fisherman, and the bait is doubtless presented to suspecting fishes with a clearness which my friend the late W. Earl Hodgson would have loved to discuss in his own inimitable fashion. For my own part, I can only

say that until I adopted practically the same tackle and methods as those used by my guides, philosophers, and friends, the Whittalls, failure dogged my steps; but that once I had fallen in line with their views, sternly renouncing all preconceived notions at variance with them, I met with an equal measure of success. The why and wherefore of a fisherman's catch are always interesting material for argument, but in this case the reasons are somewhat obviously dependent on local conditions of light.

I was also asked on the same occasion whether the chance of catching a tunny or swordfish might be greater for anyone who would devote more time and patience to the pursuit of big fish than myself. This, again, is not an easy question to answer satisfactorily, for success with the big game of the sea is always problematical. Comparing the Sea of Marmora with such regular haunts of tuna-fishermen as Santa Catalina Island or Madeira, we find the following advantages: water usually calm and not everywhere too deep, as it is, for rod-fishing, round Madeira; tunnies on the fishing-grounds every summer, without fail, and not at irregular intervals, as at Catalina; hire of boat and man cheaper than at either of the other resorts. On the other hand, the tunnies of the Marmora being caught almost entirely in the

nets, there are few fishermen skilled in taking them on the hook, as at Madeira, and there are no trained boatmen, as at Catalina. He who succeeded would deserve all praise as a pioneer, but I predict that success will not be easy to command. Moreover, with the best bass fishing in all the world available only a few miles distant, up the Gulf of Ismidt, it is making a severe demand on a sportsman's firmness of purpose to expect him to spend day after day dangling his bait over unresponsive tunnies that may not even be within ten miles of his boat. Still, there are the tunny, and there also are the swordfish, and there is more excitement in the capture of either than can be won from a hundred bass.

CHAPTER IV

NATURAL HISTORY JOTTINGS

Turkey a Promising Field for Observation — Fearlessness of Native Birds — The Zoos of Marseilles, Athens, and Cairo — Wild Birds and other Wild Animals in the Cairo Zoo — The Cairo Aquarium — Interesting Fishes of the Nile ; *Mormyrus* — Artists and Toadfish — Catfish — Museums at Yildiz, Tiflis, and the American Colleges of Bebek and Beyrouth — Increasing Scarcity of the Camel — Importance of the Buffalo — Sheep — Horses — Dogs of Constantinople — Homing Instinct in Turkish Dogs — Case of Friendship between Dog and Monkey — A Cat at Jericho which eats Snakes — Cat and Lobster's Claw — Retribution on a Ship — Domestic Pig and Wild Boar — Offer of a Young Badger — An Old Otter — Jackals — Large Bear-skins — Scarcity of Seagulls — Abundance of Herons — Their Curious Behaviour — Kingfishers on Galilee — Black Storks — Turkish Theory about Young Storks — A Sea-sick Stork — Owls Attacking Caged Birds — Nightingale and Bulbul — Captive Gamebirds — Caged Crickets — Swallows as Architects — Birds on Steamers — Frogs in Salt Water — Scarcity of Newts — Sea Snakes — Fishes of the Black Sea — Fishing in the Nile — Fishes of the Jordan — Fishes of Galilee — The Tribute Fish — Fish in the Wady Kelt — Dead Sea Spiders — Freshwater Crayfish — Why Mosquitoes are Scarce at Batoum, and Flies Plentiful at Samsoun — Fleas and other Vermin — Mud Wasps — Maybugs — Cult of the Silkworm.

For the naturalist, with the leisure to devote himself to his subject, with no eye for politics and no allegiance to a sport which ties him to the

waterside, Asiatic Turkey should be one of the happiest hunting-grounds within easy reach of civilisation. Its beasts, birds, reptiles, fishes, and insects are of extraordinary variety and interest, and the population is so small in parts of Anatolia, close to Constantinople, that the animal life is easily kept under observation, the more so as, even where the countryside is not deserted, Mohammedans do not persecute the birds, and these are in consequence fearless. I have fished within twenty yards of a black stork, a rarity in those parts, without the bird taking the least notice of me; and herons used to perch on my boat if I left it empty for a few minutes.

Of captive animals I saw, on this eastward jaunt, no collection to compare with those of former trips. The menagerie at Bronx and the colonies of the Canadian National Park have no equal on the borders of Europe and Asia. I visited, in fact, but three Zoological Gardens: those of Marseilles, Athens, and Cairo. Of museums, again, there were less than half a dozen, all containing small collections of animals: one at Yildiz, and others in the American colleges at Beyrouth and Bebek, and the municipal museum at Tiflis.

The Marseilles garden has known better days. Like the two animal collections of Paris, it is the

victim of neglect and of want of funds, its impecunious condition being in great measure the result of an unfortunate decree abolishing the charge for admission. As is not unusual, when the ideals of socialism work out to their ultimate goal, everyone is now free to see the animals; but there are very few worth seeing at all. The Athens Zoo, which lies in the suburb of New Phalerum, on the seashore, is famous for the robust health of the few animals exhibited. These include a lion more splendid than any I remember since old "Hannibal" flourished at Clifton; and a giraffe, a zebra, a wild boar, and a brace of ostriches, all of them in perfect condition. But for the strip of Mediterranean gleaming between, the majority might be breathing the air of their native land. The Ghiza Zoo, just outside Cairo, has, under the capable management of Captain Flower, taken a new lease of life and is now in a very prosperous and creditable condition. Its beautiful grounds, laid out round a lake, are the envy of many curators with less artistic material at their disposal. It occupies rather more than fifty acres, and is the haunt of upwards of a hundred and fifty different kinds of wild birds, of which a very interesting list has been published. These, Captain Flower told me, included vultures, eagle-owls, ospreys, and buzzards. It is not,

therefore, surprising that the mortality among the smaller birds should be regularly increased by the attacks of wild animals, for these visitors, mostly nocturnal, include foxes, mongooses, jackals, and wild cats. Eight different kinds of Egyptian snakes, including the deadly cobra, have also been caught in the gardens, and several kinds of frogs and toads. The Cairo Zoo has therefore interests for the naturalist quite apart from what he sees inside the cages, and in this and other respects is one of the most attractive institutions of the kind in the world.

The only other captive animals mentioned in my journals are some deer and wild sheep, as well as a very bad-tempered ostrich, in the gardens of Yildiz, and some miserable hyenas, cheetahs, snakes, and other gaolbirds in a travelling menagerie at Damascus.

A word must in passing be said in praise of the Cairo Aquarium, for which Captain Flower is likewise responsible. Much of its recent success is due to the inexhaustible patience with which both he and Mrs. Flower have studied the very difficult problem of keeping the more delicate fishes of the Nile in captivity. The tanks are built into the grotto near the Ghezireh Palace, one of the many landmarks of the extravagance of Ismaïl Pacha, and, although the

series of Nile fishes is by no means complete, we have here an epitome of all the more important and interesting families, including the ancient *Mormyrus* and grotesque toadfish. *Mormyrus*, which, as far back as the days of the Pharaohs, went by the Greek name of *Oxyrhynchus*, represents the oldest family in the Nilotic peerage. In one genus, the lower jaw protrudes in a remarkable fashion beneath the mouth, so as to serve as a feeler, and all the members of the family have feeble electric organs situated near the tail. Curators had previously regarded the difficulties of inducing these fish to feed in captivity as insuperable, but Captain Flower kept some examples under constant observation day and night in a tank in his bedroom, and thus, with a dogged patience reminiscent of Buckland, he found that they would eat a paste of minced worms, which had to be left on the bottom of the tank. To the enthusiastic student of the living fossils of the fish world, a glimpse of *Mormyrus* is alone worth a visit to Cairo, and I know of one German naturalist who, on being shown this relic of antiquity, threw down his hat and thanked God that he had been allowed to see it, and then publicly embraced the director who had been responsible for his happiness. In another tank may be seen some toadfish; and

Captain Flower, who showed me round, pointed out the curious error made by most of those who illustrate works on natural history, in which we find the toadfish lying inflated at the bottom of the water and showing its great teeth, whereas in nature it must, when distended, float at the surface, and the teeth are hidden during life by the thick and fleshy lips. The lips shrivel after death in the dried specimen, and the artist, no doubt, makes these his model for the living animal! Many familiar names have been somewhat loosely requisitioned for these fishes of the Nile, but the "carp," "barbel," and "sardine" have no connection with fishes of the same name elsewhere, though the "perch," the blue ribbon of Nile angling, is a cousin of my old friend of fourteen years earlier, the perch of the Fitzroy River in Queensland. The prevailing group of fishes in the Nile (and these extend fully a thousand miles from its mouth) are catfish (*Silurus*, etc.), of which several kinds are shown in the tanks. These include the great *armoot*, for which I fished a whole day without much success, and an electric kind, which has perhaps the most extraordinary manner of getting its food recorded in the animal world, a trick which reminds one of the way in which the robber skua knocks gulls on the head and makes them drop

their fish. The electric catfish of the Nile is yet more cunning, for, having found a fish that has just fed, it gives it a slight shock, just enough to make it sick, and immediately gobbles up the disgorged meal. This fearsome epicure is probably unique in its feeding habits, and indeed so unpleasant an appetite does not call for imitation.

Such museums as I visited in the Near East contain few treasures. In that at Yildiz I noticed a shark with the tail crosswise, as in porpoises, and at Tiflis the assistant director pointed out the poor antlers of the Caucasian chamois compared with its stature. The two American mission colleges have museums with very fair type collections of the local fauna, that at Bebek showing good cases of fishes from the Bosphorus; while that at Beyrouth has a very showy case of conies and a Syrian bear, which one of the teachers shot in the Lebanon.

Of domestic animals in the Ottoman Empire, the most conspicuous is unquestionably the Anatolian buffalo. Camels are less common than the visitor from the West has been led to expect. True, thousands are to be seen on the plains of Syria and Palestine, but the animal enters less and less into the commercial life of a land where railways are beginning to link the hinterland with the seashore, and the only ports at which I saw

camels in any number were Smyrna, Dardanelles, and Jaffa. Stamboul sees fewer every year, and the caravans of other days trade no more between Tiflis and Batoum. But the buffalo is everywhere. The pity is that he should not be bred for beef as well as for muscle, so that the Turkish caterer might not have to look to Servia or Odessa for his meat. These buffaloes, which are to be seen dragging waggons in every city, vary considerably in size. Round Ismidt and Brousa they are magnificent beasts, but along the littoral of the Black Sea they are of feebler stature. This discrepancy makes it next to impossible to devise a uniform tax on herds, which shall press equally on the taxpayer throughout the empire; for the present tax, which allows two oxen free and taxes the rest, is evaded by the peasant of Ismidt, who finds two of the large local beasts sufficient for his needs, but falls heavily on the farmers of Trebizond and Samsoun, where the buffaloes are so small that each man needs half a dozen at the least. Buffaloes are, in fact, the favourite draught animals of the country, and may be seen in the hayfields of Anatolia or in the bazaars of Tiflis, where they draw the skins of their dead fellows full of the local wine. A bullockful of wine is a generous measure which I have never seen elsewhere. The buffalo gives

A BULLOCK-CART.

The Anatolian buffalo is the favourite draught animal in Asiatic Turkey, particularly in the country districts. The beasts are patient and hard-working, but make wretched beef. In the foreground is a *zaptieh*, or policeman.

[*Face p.* 170.

Face p. 170.

very rich milk, which I found too heavy and indigestible, though it commands a better price than that of ordinary cows. These buffaloes are fierce and quarrelsome beasts, and I have often watched their battles, with mouths slavering and horns engaged, until a gaunt Turk would stride up and separate the combatants by raining a shower of blows on their hides.

Of sheep I also saw great flocks round Ismidt, mingled in many cases with goats. The fat-tailed sheep is also in great demand. Many of the men in charge of buffalo would have a single sheep with them, though what purpose it served I did not know enough of the language to ask them.

Horses are a disappointment if one expects much. Most of those used in the cavalry regiments are imported from Hungary. The horses of the country are for the most part fitter to carry packs than men. Of ponies, the most likely looking lot that I saw belonged to the Circassian colony at Buyuk Derbend, near Lake Sabanja. These *émigrés* from the Caucasus enjoy a high reputation as horse-stealers, but they seem to have some knowledge of breeding as well. The horses of a country are determined by its roads. There is, moreover, fair indication of the national character in the way these are

kept up. Gibbon's praise of Roman roads, which went straight for their goal, making very little of obstacles, and which have survived throughout the ages, could apply to few others save perhaps the shorter distances which the English have paved in the island of Jamaica. The Turks are not builders of roads. In view of the fact that, until their recent political and national awakening, they never wanted to get anywhere or do anything, their backwardness in the art of road-making is hardly to be wondered at. At most, they would occasionally cut a track, or tread a path, farther into the interior of some wretched province on which a tax-collecting pacha had cast the eye of desire. All notion of making roads for peaceful purposes, for intercourse between inland markets and the coast, was foreign to their spirit, and is only gradually finding favour under the Constitution. That the lamentable communications within the empire will be remedied as funds permit, there is no reason to doubt; but funds are not conspicuous just now, and meanwhile the miserable horses have to jog as best they may over virgin rock. Those who expect to see Turkish cavalry officers mounted on blood Arabians will be sadly disappointed to find the army provided almost exclusively with stocky little beasts from Transyl-

vania. The bulk of the horses used for pack purposes are weedy victims bred in the country, haggard wrecks which stumble along under gross overweight of wood or coke, which would mean misery even over good roads, and which, on such as exist in Turkish cities, must be hell.

Of all the dogs of my travels, those of Constantinople were surely the most remarkable. Salonika is the one considerable city of the empire in which I did not see these street dogs. The dogs of Constantinople are variously estimated at from thirty to fifty thousand. More than one attempt has been made to get rid of them, but the Old Turks of the bazaars bitterly resent the mere suggestion of such a measure. They are the most apathetic dogs I ever met with, and only two apparitions are able to rouse them to fury: a strange dog trespassing from another part of the city, or a performing bear. Not even death, usually so disquieting to these animals, has the least effect upon them, and I remember being particularly struck by the lethargy with which they lay in groups around the gibbets from which malefactors dangled in the public gaze after the Affair of April. The dogs took no notice whatever of the corpses, but seemed merely to resent this unwonted invasion of their favourite basking-ground near

the Admiralty. They are said to be very vicious and spiteful at night, but I usually drove at such hours, and neither enjoyed nor sought any opportunity of testing this statement. During the day, at any rate, they are invariably gentle and timid, though occasionally very savage among themselves. The Turks, though they love fighting for its own sake, never let either dogs or children fight it out, but always separate the combatants before matters have gone very far. These semi-wild dogs are endowed with the most wonderful homing instinct. A resident of Moda told me that on one occasion he had taken one as foster-mother to some puppies that had lost their mother. When her duties were done she was taken in a boat to a village several miles along the shore, and there landed. She could not, owing to intervening buildings, keep the boat in sight on its return journey, yet by nightfall she was in the Englishman's garden again. As a yet more remarkable illustration of this curious faculty, one of the great sheep-dogs of Anatolia, formidable brutes much dreaded by sportsmen with valuable shooting dogs, was sent as a present to someone living in the north of England, who, in turn, gave him a little later to a friend residing at another

place a couple of hours away by rail. The very first evening the hound, dissatisfied with his new quarters, broke his chain and escaped, turning up next morning at his late home. Yet, previous to his journey the day before in the guard's van, the brute had never been in a train since its first arrival in England, and that was along a different line. Here is a curious case for explanation by someone more learned in canine psychology than myself. Being in the van, it could not take any bearings, and even if it had run back along the line, where was the scent to guide it? Frankly, I am beaten, and can do no more than set down the circumstances as they were told to myself.

Writing of dogs reminds me of a curious friendship between a retriever and a monkey, which I watched on the *Messageries* boat *Sidon*. They were the property of Mehmet Ali Bey, Consul-General at Tabriz, and the monkey had done her best to mother the retriever when it was a puppy, and continued, now that it was grown to an enormous size and could easily have carried her in its mouth, to exercise a ludicrous protection over it, chattering with rage whenever anyone touched it. The retriever, by the way, though a fine swimmer in fresh water, was panic-stricken and all but drowned off

Trebizond, where its master and I had been swimming from the ship. The dog was sent into the sea, its first experience of salt water, and at once lost its head, striking out and disregarding its owner's call, so that it had eventually to be hauled on board in a basket.

Of cats one sees few in the Near East, and the majority are half-wild outcasts, such as I remember in Moorish towns. There are, in fact, only three cat stories in my journals. The first is of a cat that dwelt in a cottage beside Elisha's Fountain at Old Jericho. It seized the first small fish that I caught and bolted with it, and the owner then told me that he kept it because it ate snakes, of which, since the Germans had been digging up the ruins, there were far too many round his dwelling. My next cat lived at Dérinjé, and it attracted my attention by its frenzied efforts, accompanied by the most pitiful howling, to reach the savoury contents of a lobster claw. Maddened by the promise that tickled its nostrils, it mewed and whined, turning the claw from side to side, licking, scratching, but still unable to satisfy its desires, so that it was a fit companion for the fox and stork of the fable.

The third cat has its home on the *Sidon*, and a sad episode in its family history during

my voyage up the Black Sea points the moral of a law of retribution even for ships' cats. I first noticed it stalking a half-grown peregrine falcon, which was resting, as hawks often do, in the rigging. It always just eluded the cat, and I doubt whether the chase was a very whole-hearted effort, since the cat probably knew that the price of victory would be either an eye or some square inches of fur. In fact, I since had reason to suspect that the poor cat was, like the jilted heroes in ladies' novels, throwing itself into sport only to drown the memory of its sorrow. For it transpired that, only the night before, while the cat had left five kittens in a basket and had descended into the hold to raid some young rats, the old rats had come round by another way and had carried off two of the kittens!

Domestic pigs were not much in evidence in Turkey, though the Greeks keep them in the villages of the Marmora. I only saw pigs in any quantity at Calamatta, in Greece, and at Batoum, in Russia. The Calamatta pigs, so plentiful in January, had all disappeared when I visited the place again in August. At Batoum a number of old sows strolled absurdly about the quays, inspecting incoming vessels almost as minutely as the Russian police. The wild

boar, on the other hand, is plentiful throughout Asiatic Turkey wherever there is wooded country. The late Sir William Whittall, who had lifelong experience of exciting sport with pig, told me the boar of Anatolia (*i.e.* Asia Minor) grow to a great weight, and that some of them would in all probability cap all the records published by Rowland Ward.

If I except a young badger which an Arab lad offered to me as I was riding back from Jericho, and a very large dog otter which rose one evening alongside my boat, the only wild beasts that I saw or heard in the country were the jackals, which used to bark in their blood-curdling fashion among the foothills every warm night in June just as the sun went down. As their music is locally accepted as a promise of fine weather, and as I enjoyed ten weeks without rain, their barking, which at first startled one unaccustomed to it, was soon welcomed. In hard winters, emboldened by cold and hunger, they come down from the hills, with an occasional wolf for company, and raid the henhouses, but during the warm months they find abundance of food in the hills. The only jackal I actually saw was a great yellow brute, which I watched from the train between Galilee and Damascus as it cautiously crept up to a little group of

storks, with what success I was unable to see. It seems out of the question that such tall and wary birds should ever be ambushed in such flat country; though, on the other hand, it seems almost as improbable that the jackal's instinct should so far mislead it as to prompt a long and useless stalk without some chance of a prize.

Of bears I saw no trace, nor was it the right season to seek them. At the American college at Beyrouth they showed me one which had been shot by one of the teaching staff, and which, its slayer declared, looked a monster when it came charging blindly out of its lair, though as a matter of fact it was a very humble specimen. The finest bearskins I saw were a couple at Trebizond. I had no measure with me, but am certain that one was a splendid skin. The price asked was small, but the skin had been hopelessly damaged by moth. The owner assured me that the hillmen had often brought him much finer skins, and indeed there should be excellent bear shooting in the forests along that coast.

To the bird-lover, Turkey offers wonderful variety. The commonest bird of my fishing rambles in the Gulf of Ismidt was the heron, which took the place of the gulls and cormorants

of earlier fishing scenes. Seagulls, indeed, though common enough in the Bosphorus and Black Sea, are so scarce in the Gulf as to have given rise to an amusing mistake on my part, over which I laugh whenever I recall it, and which enables me to tell a tale against myself, a pleasure everyone should enjoy now and then. One morning, about four, I was fishing for bass close to the shore. Buffaloes were wallowing among the reed; nightingales were carolling in the bushes; cuckoos called among the hills. All of a sudden a new cry sounded, apparently out of a patch of scrub close to the water's edge. It suggested something between a cat and a laugh, and Nikko could only tell me that it was a "*glarus.*" I at first judged that it must be a wild cat, or possibly a small lynx, and was eager to see the author of the sound, but the shore was marshy thereabouts and we could approach no closer. When, however, Nikko added that he had not only caught the creature on his line, but also eaten it, I began to think that there must be visions about, and suspended judgment until I could consult the Italian stationmaster at Dérinjé. He did not enlighten me much further, for all that he could say was, that it was a bird which fed on carrion. The inquiry was narrowing down to some kind of hawk or kite. Nikko's

catholic appetite was no obstacle to such an explanation, and the story of catching it on a line might have been romance. The truth did not come out for several days, when at last Nikko plucked wildly at my arm, with :

"*Edo, Moussyu, edo o glarus!*" (There, Sir, there is the *glarus*!) And the *glarus* was a seagull!

One little band of six pelicans, large white birds, I came on quite suddenly one morning on the south shore.

The herons were the only plentiful fish-eating bird in the Gulf, and they were everywhere, sitting on boats, buoys, and quays, their harsh croak sounding at all hours of the day and night. The Turks call them *balukchi* (*i.e.* fishermen), and none dream of molesting them. I once saw one alight on a fishing-ground already occupied by another heron, and a protesting grunt and a swordlike flourish of the bill drove the intruder off to pastures new. Another morning, however, I saw the same comedy with another ending, for in this case the original occupant politely vacated its "swim" without a protest and left the other in possession. Whether it was a weaker bird, or whether it had already caught enough to satisfy its hunger, I do not know, but the effect was very curious. Of kingfishers I saw few, the most attractive being a pair of black-and-white birds

on the Sea of Galilee, which I watched catching their midday meal off Magdala. Poised in the air like kestrels, they would flutter over the shallows for some minutes before diving after each fish, and it looked as if they might be doing this with the idea of dazzling the fish, like a hawk over partridges.

After the heron, the stork is the most conspicuous bird in that part of the country, not so much by reason of great numbers, as on account of its size. There are even a few black storks (*Ciconia nigra*), much rarer birds, and not endowed with the same preference for the dwellings of man. I believe that they nest in the forests. One of these handsome birds was quite a friend of mine, for he would strut day after day near my boat, only just keeping out of reach of the camera, and round the edge of a swamp in which the frogs would croak defiantly until he had one by the hind leg. According to Mr. Edwin Whittall, who has fished the Gulf of Ismidt for many years, only a single pair breed there, on the south shore. It is possible, since they rear only a single pair, of different sex, that the young birds replace the parents each season, as such, at any rate, is the local theory respecting white storks. It is remarkable that not more than this one pair should be seen each year on all that coastline, where

there must be hundreds of acres of marshland with the right food. The most pitiful stork that I saw in the country was a "pet" which a passenger brought on board the Khedivial Mail-boat *Hosseir* at Jaffa. A terrible sea was running at the time, and it was only just possible to land the passengers. The unfortunate bird, half-dead from fright before it was out of the shore-boat, was handed up the ladder in a condition best described as a dead faint. I never remember seeing so large a bird unconscious before. When it regained its wits it stood, stupidly shifting from one leg to the other, on the lower deck, and a little later it was violently seasick, which, instead of relieving it, seemed to make the patient worse. What an irony it seemed that the most wonderful of travellers, for whom in its migrations the expanse of continents and the wrath of seas are no obstacle, should have been compelled to suffer on board ship during that night between Jaffa and Port Said, which it could have done comfortably on the wing in a few hours.

Owls hoot round Dérinjé all through the warm summer nights, and on several occasions, when walking back early from the night's fishing, I surprised one or more flying softly to shelter in broad daylight. They were small brown owls,

and in Asia Minor, no doubt, as elsewhere, they feed for the most part on field-mice, lizards, and the like. They are not, however, wholly innocent of raids on caged birds. My friend, Herr Hünner, the portmaster, lost several little songbirds, and two, which were killed during my visit, bore undoubted marks on the neck where the owl had just managed to reach them with its beak or claws, though they probably died of fright, as little birds will. Once, indeed, he caught an owl actually dashing against the cage, and shot it in the act. As the cages are always nailed on the house out of reach of cats, there can be no doubt as to the culprits in every instance.

Nightingales sob in every coppice. After the third week in June, the song is husky and faltering, and soon ceases altogether. Stray nightingales were still piping in a half-hearted manner when I left Dérinjé the last week of the month, but I heard none elsewhere. I had hoped to hear the bulbul on the banks of the Jordan, but heard only nightingales. Careless readings of Persian poets have caused confusion between the two, but the bulbul (*Daulias hafizi*) is a different bird.

The captive birds are chiefly blackbirds and thrushes, but the game-birds are more interesting. In a tavern at Athens I saw a captive partridge,

and Mr. Nassan, the well-known brass dealer of Damascus, showed me a captive quail. The most extraordinary creature which the Turks keep caged for the sake of its voice is the cicada (*Cicada*). Cicadas abound in every tree, and all through the hot summer days, when even the birds are silent, they make maddening music. I was even told, though I do not know if the statement is accurate, that they differ from the mosquitoes, in that only the male sings, whereas in the curse of sleepless nights it is the lady who hums. They are delicate singers, and do not last long in captivity, but they are at any rate easily replaced.

The members of the swallow tribe are much in evidence all the spring and summer, and swallows nest under the eaves of most cottages. A pair at Dérinjé had evidently long made the upstairs rooms of the Hotel de la Gare a hunting-ground for flies, and when I first arrived they would fly fearlessly in and out of my bedroom windows. My coming seemed to frighten them, and on one occasion the male bird, coming into the room by mistake while I was busy writing, darted madly round and round the room for an hour, too terrified to escape by either the door or windows, all of which I left open on purpose. In two nests in a deserted cottage at Solujak I noticed

a peculiarity. The nests had no dome, and they looked at first sight as if some careless hand had broken them. Yet the reason for such economy of architecture was soon apparent, since not only were the nests under cover, and therefore in no need of protection against rain, but there were no sparrows in the immediate neighbourhood, and it is mainly against those robbers that the weaker swallows have to guard their homes. The only other birds that I met with were those which from time to time rested weary wings on the rigging or rails of the steamers which bore me on summer seas. These included the aforementioned peregrine, which successfully eluded the cat of the *Sidon*, only to be caught by the ship's boy. It died the same night, whether from fright or not it is hard to say. On another occasion a hawk, about the size of a kestrel, and a pair of wagtails followed the Khedivial Mail-boat *Ismailia* for ten or fifteen miles between Alexandria and Athens. I left them flying over the after deck when I went below to tiffin, and when I came up again they were nowhere to be seen. It has often struck me that ocean-going steamers are responsible for not a few of the so-called "casual stragglers," as distinguished from the regular migrants, tempting them to go to sea, and affording them occasional rest by the way.

It is always difficult, for all the structural differences that separate them, to dissociate the swallows from the swifts, and the most conspicuous of the latter group that I saw on my travels was the white-bellied Alpine swift (*Cypselus melba*), a larger species than our visitor, and familiar in hilly country from Berne to Bagdad. Hundreds of these birds dashed screaming about our horses' heads in the hills around Jerusalem, skimming far and wide over the April carpet of yellow marigold and red anemone, with the strands of poppy and pheasant's-eye and the patches of gold mandrake, which is as deep-rooted in the sacred soil to-day as when Reuben took it to his mother. Then the birds were back again, mocking, as it seemed, the wooden gait of my borrowed charger.

Of reptiles and the like I saw little, as most of my time was spent between cities and the sea, and country rambles were only an occasional treat. Frogs I heard day and night for two months in every marsh on the shores of the Gulf of Ismidt, which, though not on the whole unhealthy, are dotted with marshes. Their *brekekeks* made novel music as an accompaniment for sea-fishing outings, and what was particularly interesting was to find how thoroughly they were acclimatised to the salt water which ran into their

lagoons whenever the wind was off the sea. What food they could find in such brackish water, which would not support the ordinary insects of their menu, I never discovered, but that they were quite at home in the open sea I proved to my own satisfaction by throwing a couple off the little jetty at Dérinjé. Though they did not dive, even when I clapped my hands to frighten them, as they would have in fresh water, they struck out for the shore after a moment's hesitation and made a straight course for their own swamp, which is at the end of the pier. Newts were not apparently plentiful in the district. Mr. Boulenger had written early in the spring to ask if I could find him any, but I only succeeded in catching a pair of the Common Newt (*Molge vulgaris*), orange-red beneath the tail, in a little pond at Solujak. Nor did I fare better with snakes, my only contribution being a couple of water-snakes (*Tropidonotus tesselatus*), which are closely related to our ringed snake. These harmless creatures swim in the shallows of the Marmora, lying among the stones until the weather is warm enough for them to take to the water. A favourite attitude is that of basking on the surface, with the head and a few inches of the body held erect. On one occasion, wading in the shallows near Pendik, I caught a somewhat

large example in the landing-net, and shut it up in a box, but it got out in the boat. I had an extensive search made (as I was sleeping in the boat that night), but without success. My Greek fisherman subsequently caught two others for me, which I at once put in pure spirit. They die hard, as it was twenty minutes before they were at rest. These snakes are said to be plentiful in the Sea of Galilee. A long track of foam, at right angles to my felucca, was thus explained by the Syrian boatmen.

Land tortoises and water tortoises are equally plentiful round Dérinjé, some of the former of large size.

Of fishes something is said in the preceding chapter. I came across three distinct faunas in the Nile, in the Jordan (with Galilee), and in the open Marmora and Gulf of Ismidt. Of Black Sea fishes I saw too little to be worth more than passing mention: some small whiting at Trebizond, a sturgeon or two at Batoum, and a report of large garfish (which I did not see) at Ineboli, a beautiful town at the western end of that sea.

The fishes of the Nile have already been referred to. Mr. Boulenger has catalogued them, after examining about 15,000 specimens, and finds that they are practically the same over at

least a thousand miles of that wonderful river. Owing to the short time at my disposal, I was not very successful in catching them. Indeed, I spent only one whole day in the attempt, chartering a felucca, with a crew of four, including a professional fisherman, a Copt, who brought the bait. As this consisted of what is known as "lights," it was not pleasant company on a hot day in a small boat. It is wound round the hook and gut, like macaroni, and the favourite spots for *armoot*, which are powerful catfish, are among the moorings of Cook's stern-wheelers, opposite Ghezireh Island. There I fished for eight or nine hours, catching only a large eel and an *armoot* of about 3 lbs. One terrific pull I had, and the Copt swore by his faith that it was an *armoot* of at least 20 lbs., as, for all I know, it may have been. The *cordon bleu* of Nileside angling is the *Ishr*, or giant perch, but seeing that residents spend months trying to catch one, there was no hope for a day visitor.

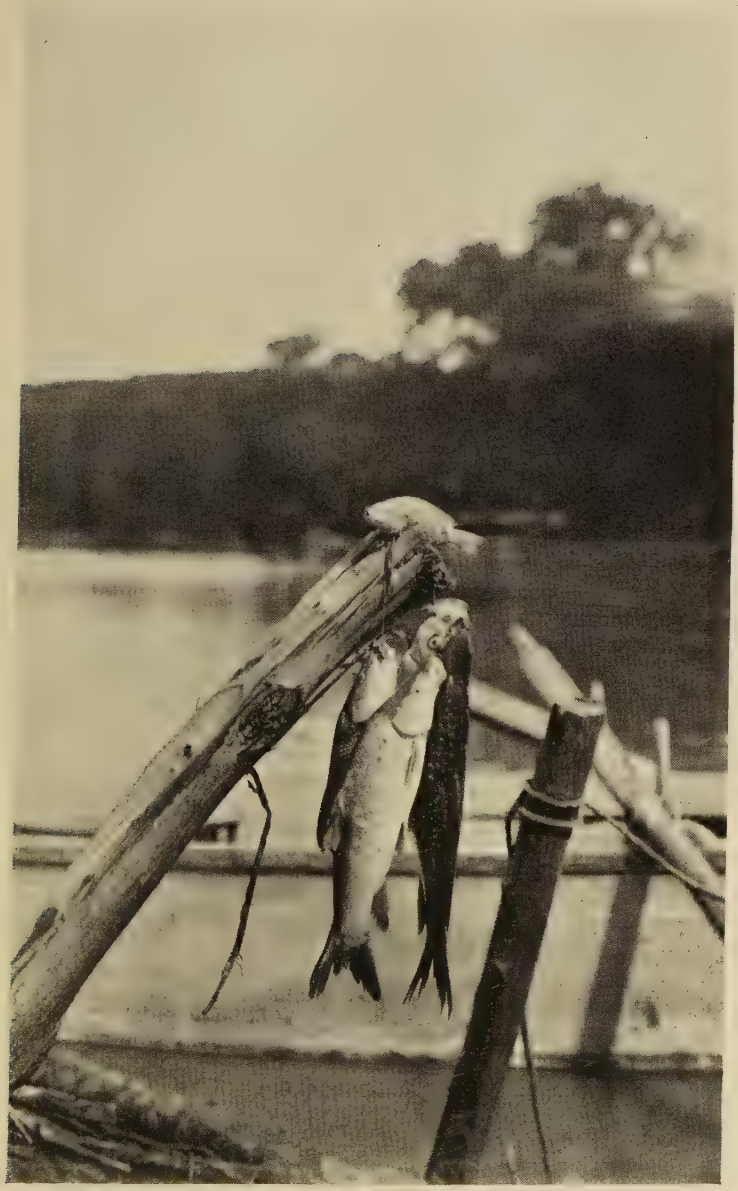
The Jordan produces a number of ground-feeding fishes, of which three kinds are shown in the accompanying photograph. One resembles a carp, a second a barbel, and a third a small bream. Both the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee swarm with leeches.

The barbel-like fishes (*Capöeta damascina*) of

FISHES OF THE JORDAN.

The sacred river is anything but an ideal stream for the angler, but it has a variety and abundance of fishes, many of which are netted by an old Greek who lives close to the reach in which the pilgrims bathe. As will be seen from the photograph, the fishes are of the "coarse" type, not unlike our carp and barbel in appearance.

[*Face p.* 190.



[*Face p.* 190.

the Wady Kelt, a mountain stream which runs into the Jordan near Jericho, have been mentioned. They occur also in Elisha's Fountain, which is connected with the same system. The fishes of Galilee (which is also known as the Lake of Tiberias or Genesareth) are plentiful and varied. A collection of small and badly set up specimens may be seen in the hotel at Tiberias, and they consist chiefly of different species of the genus *Chromis*, some of which are also found in the Nile. In one of these, the male carries the eggs and newly-hatched young in a cavity inside the mouth. Some of them, of which I saw a great boatload one morning at Tiberias, have the colouring of wrasses. There is also a very plentiful little silvery fish locally called "sardine" (a name applied all the world over to probably a hundred different fishes); and there is a large catfish, which is popularly supposed to have been the kind from which Peter took the tribute money. The *burbut*, as the Arabs call it, has its haunts in the deepest portions of the lake, which, itself nearly 700 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, is in parts over 800 feet deep. Curiously enough, one of these was captured just before the time of my visit, with a small coin stuck fast under its tongue, and it is indeed probable that, like others

of its tribe, such a fish would snap up a coin that, falling out of a boat, gleamed on its way through the clear water. The clearness of this beautiful lake, which lies in a volcanic basin, is remarkable, the more so when we remember that it receives the turgid waters of the Jordan. These are always muddy, yet within fifty yards of the river, Galilee is as clear as any Hampshire stream.

The fishes of the Sea of Marmora and Bosphorus, about which some facts were given in the preceding chapter, are exceedingly numerous. The official list of fishes which pay duty on landing includes upwards of sixty kinds, ranging from the tunny down to the sardine. The commonest are various mackerels (*Scumbru*, *Lipari*, *Colios*, *Palamut*, etc.), the two kinds of red mullet (*Barbounia* and *Tekir*), swordfish, and turbot. The latter, which are chiefly caught in the Black Sea, are excellent eating. Grey mullet (*Kefals*) are plentiful, but do not figure very prominently in the local supply. The bass (*Levrak*) is another very important fish, ranking high with epicures, who pay nearly as much for it as for salmon at the height of the season at home.

As in most warm climates, the invertebrates are well represented. Of spiders I saw few, the most interesting being a trapdoor spider near

Dérinjé, and some yellow spiders on the beach of the Dead Sea. What they found to eat on that lifeless strand I could not ascertain. I could see no insects. Crustaceans are plentiful in the Marmora : splendid lobsters, prawns, and shrimps. Lake Sabanja also has crayfish, the females of which carry the newly-hatched young in bunches under the tail. Like lobsters, these crayfish are very quarrelsome, and often cast their claws when fighting among themselves.

There is always something rather repellent, at any rate to eyes unaccustomed to the sight, about crabs in fresh water far from the sea, and it was with a shock that I all but trod on a fine and active crab (*Thelphusa fluviatilis*?) when bathing in a pool of the Wady Kelt near Jericho. I subsequently recognised the same, or a similar, species in the Sea of Galilee.

The oysters of the Gulf, usually excellent, were not in season during the time I lived on its shores ; though, even had they been in season, I should have been no better off. The waste tobacco thrown into the sea by the Régie was thought to have accounted for the fact that the shells of thousands were gaping and empty. The poison of the narcotic may have forced open the shells, and small fish and crabs would quickly devour the oyster.

A curious black millipede is very common on the roads round Jerusalem. The natives call it the "Rod of Moses," as it has a habit of curling up on the approach of danger and remaining motionless till it thinks itself safe once more. I rode past dozens, and stopped to touch one here and there with the tip of my whip. In every case they rolled up and looked like fossil ammonites. Whether such a creature could really have imposed on the Egyptians, if, like other conjurers, Moses did not allow his audience on the stage, I do not know, but if they occur in Egypt he may well have made such use of them.

Insects are abundant throughout the land. Mosquitoes troubled me far less than in the United States and Canada at the same season, though towards the end of my stay there were enough to swear by at Dérinjé, a few in Pera in the first week of August, and a tremendous quantity at Salonika later in that month, when they even invaded the cabins of my steamer anchored half a mile from the beach. At Batoum, on the other hand, there were none at all, thanks, no doubt, to the all-pervading odour of petroleum, which, even with the declining trade of that port, so impregnates everything that the very fish caught in the bay are said, truly or otherwise, to taste of the oil. At Easter, which is the height

of the tourist season, mosquitoes give little or no trouble in the Holy Land. I saw only two at Jaffa, and not one at either Jerusalem or Jericho, the surrounding country being too dry for them. The worst insects I encountered thereabouts were some small but fierce midges which came out in a rainstorm on the Jordan and bit me with great enthusiasm while I was fishing. The common fly is a terrible infliction at some places, and notably at Samsoun, on the Black Sea, where it swarms. I attribute this to the agency of bullock teams, which bring them in in thousands from the country roads and leave them in the town. Fleas, together with those other bed-fellows which are not named in very refined circles, but which I always call bugs, are everywhere plentiful in the warm weather, and only the strictest regard to cleanliness will keep them out of a house. Tiberias is regarded by the Mohammedans as the headquarters of the King of the Fleas, but he has many capitals in the empire. Only the enforcement of improved methods of sanitation can ever keep vermin out of the cities of the East. What is needed is the same rigorous regulation as that which we enforce in Egypt against the spread of mosquitoes in the cities. It has long been recognised that the chief source of supply is the river-craft, and,

by imposing a fine of an Egyptian piastre (2½d.) for every mosquito found on board any boat on arrival at Khartoum, the authorities have succeeded in practically keeping the mosquitoes out. Indeed, in a few years, they will be as rare on the banks of the Nile as crocodiles.

Wasps were not particularly troublesome at Dérinjé, though there were a few enormous hornets, which looked worse than they really were, for they never attempted to sting unless disturbed. The most interesting wasps of my acquaintance I only learnt to know after I had left. During my stay, a number of little mud-cells were constructed on the curtains of the Hotel de la Gare. Every few days there would be an addition to the colony, and they puzzled me, because, watch as I would, they were never built before my eyes, nor could I even identify the architects. Assuming that there must be an occupant in the shape of an egg or larva, I carefully detached three and put them away in a box with cotton wool. Unfortunately, I then forgot all about them until, when packing my luggage some weeks later for the Black Sea, I came across the box and opened it, only to drop it, for two lively wasps crawled somewhat feebly over the edge. These regained their liberty, but a third had died in captivity, and I brought it home.

These are the mud-wasps (? *Odynerus*), though I never before heard of them constructing their nests on window curtains. Possibly the fact of the hotel being empty during the greater part of the year may be responsible for so singular a choice.

I also brought home one of the gigantic dor-beetles, or "June-bugs," of the locality. They are an enormous species (? *Polyphylla*), and come blundering against you in the twilight with startling force, and they utter a sharp, squealing note, not unlike that of some bats. I first discovered this by putting one away in my pocket in a matchbox. About an hour later, while I was fishing in the moonlight, it suddenly uttered this curious sound, which, with something of a shock, I traced to my own pocket.

Of all the insects, useful or otherwise, brought to the notice of the visitor in Asia Minor during the summer months, none can compare in importance with the silkworm, the object of assiduous culture in every village round the Marmora. Everywhere in May and June, girls may be seen sitting in the doorways stripping mulberry branches of their leaves for the precious larvæ to feed on. The best (often the only) room is given up to them for six or eight weeks. When sleeping in the cottage of a Greek fisherman on the

north shore of Lake Sabanja, I all but threw myself on a thousand worms, as, in the half light, I had mistaken their layers of devoured leaves for a grass bed. Miss Newnham, lady-superintendent of the Armenian Mission conducted by Dr. Chambers at Baktchéjik, told me that she looks to silk for a portion of the income of that establishment. She bred for "seed" in the first place, that is to say, wasted the silk for the sake of the eggs; but this is wisely subjected to such careful inspection on behalf of the Public Debt that she gave it up, and now sells the cocoons in the open market (at about a shilling the pound), first baking them. This is done to kill the chrysalis, which would otherwise eat its way out and ruin the silk. Which shows that, in the culture of silkworms as in other pursuits for profit or pleasure, you cannot eat your cake and have it too.

CHAPTER V

A CORNER OF ASIA MINOR

Extent of Asia Minor—Conservatism of the Natives—Hostility to Europeans — Deirmenderé — Pastoral and Agricultural Resources—Laziness of the Peasants—Poor Quality of Farm Stock—Fruit and Crops—Train to Ismidt—Darijeh—Héréké—A Native Silk Factory—A New Industry—Lost Trade of Dérinjé—A Sultan's Kiosk—A Royal Farm—Antiquity of Ismidt — Armenians — Catching Deserters — Lake Sabanja—A Colony of Circassians—Turks and Greeks—Silk and Fish — Native Villages — Mission at Barchichag — Martial Armenians—The Turks of Deirmenderé—Turkish Coffee—Running Water—A Greek Village—Hotel at Dérinjé—The Curse of Babel—Provisions—Fisheries of the Gulf of Ismidt—Armenian Fishermen—A Catch of Tunny—Villages of the Marmora—The Plague of Vermin—The Princes' Islands—State Prisoners—Life at Prinkipo—A Yacht Club—Resorts on the Bosphorus—Driving in Scutari.

I HAVE always wondered how the owners of so magnificent a property as Anatolia, otherwise Asia Minor, with its mining, agricultural, and industrial possibilities beyond the dreams of avarice, can care a snap of the fingers for rocky islands or sandy corners of Europe. Sentiment is fine even in nations, but empires have to be conducted by the rules of commerce. I am a poor hand at figures, but I imagine that the

area of Anatolia is a good deal more than half again that of the British Isles. The population, on the other hand, is no more than seven millions, or less than one-sixth that of Great Britain and Ireland. For months I seemed never to be out of Asia Minor. My first glimpse of it was at Smyrna. Then I lived for two months at and round Dérinjé, which is in the Ismidt district. Then, some weeks later, I went up the Black Sea and landed at Samsoun and Trebizond: still Anatolia! It is the Greek word for Levant.

The extraordinary backwardness of the natives in developing the wonderful fertility of this magnificent province is the result of the Hamidian *régime*, under which the tiller of the soil or the stockbreeder had no inducement to improve his condition, seeing that his surplus was filched by the ruling class. The tithe-collector is still dreaded, but he can no longer reduce the gains of hard-working landowners to a living wage as he did under the old conditions. What is even more baffling to the stranger than the bovine patience with which these poor victims bowed their neck under that unparalleled tyranny, is the obstinacy with which many of them still uphold the fallen Padishah, whose minions ground them under heel. One can only conclude that it is in their blood, bone of their bone. They will have the

Shéri'at, or sacred law, *coûte que coûte*, and they distrust this new evangel of Liberty, with its Constitution, for no sounder reason than that it smacks of European, and therefore Christian, ideals! As a matter of fact, much has been done, and is still being done, to spread a more intelligent propaganda among these fanatical Old Turks by men like Ahmed Ihsan Bey, formerly Editor of the *Servet-i-Funoun*, who, in his yacht *Nesryn*, visited every village along the shores of the Gulf of Ismidt. Ahmed Ihsan has a country bungalow at Deirmenderé, and it was here that, even before I knew him personally, I had practical proof of the good work he had done in bringing the natives to an understanding of the folly of hating Europeans and their political ideals. Until comparatively recently the southern shore of the Gulf of Ismidt had a poor reputation for hospitality. Stories were told of stones and sticks being thrown at strangers by the village boys, and even of one yacht at any rate being fired on in the darkness. That many of these reports were coloured with a view to thrilling the griffin in search of tales of adventure is not improbable, but there was certainly some foundation for such evil rumours, and it is only fair to credit Ihsan and his friends with the absolute peace and goodwill now reigning all along that coast. Many of

those waterside villages are not Turkish. Baktchéjik is Armenian, and Ghonja is Greek. Deirmenderé lies between, and I was warned not to go ashore here. One daybreak, however, I smelt a brew of coffee so delicious that the sight of Turks drinking it and being served by a tall Arab *cafeji* proved too much for me. So I threw all warnings to the winds, and as a result I was seated among them ten minutes later, and one brought me coffee, and another gave me flowers, and a third asked to be photographed. Hey presto! So vanished the fierce savagery of the men of Deirmenderé. A couple of months later I went to Deirmenderé on Ihsan's yacht, and the welcome I received from the villagers much amused him.

The wonderful wealth of Anatolia is, and always will be, agricultural. That the pastoral life is more in evidence in some parts is merely because the easy work of sitting under a shady fig tree, or leaning on a staff, and peacefully watching sheep and goats nibbling the grass, is more congenial to the Turkish temperament than the careful tillage of the soil. It affords, moreover, many opportunities of change of scene, so welcome to the nomad element in the population. Admirers of the Turkish peasant commonly describe him as hard-working. Those Turkish peasants whom I do not know are no doubt honest

AN "OLD TURK."

Here are a few of the "fierce" natives of Deirmendèré, and the old baker, who stands on the extreme right of the picture, is a typical "Old Turk," though always courteous to visitors who go ashore from their yachts. The author never went there, for either coffee or cherries (for both of which the "Valley of the Mills" is famous), without this veteran offering him either flowers or sweetmeats.

[*Face p.* 202.

Face p. 202.]

toilers in the sweat of their brow, but, all the same, I have known four men, with two bullock waggons, take six days to clear the small hayricks off a field that the same number of Devonshire farm-labourers (not hogs for work either!) would have got through in an afternoon. There are excuses. Once the clock is past 12, Turkish (*i.e.* 7.30), the day is warm, and smuggled tobacco of an excellent fullness can be bought for sixpence a pound. Trees are abundant, and even if there is an overseer, he too is not above the seductions of a few cigarettes in the shade. Besides which, there is something almost religious in such delays. Haste, says the native proverb, is of the devil!

It is not to be denied that quantity, rather than quality, is the present ideal of the Anatolian pastoralist. An immense herd of buffalo and white cattle may number no more than a dozen really fine beasts. A flock of sheep, which in open order whitens a hundred acres, consists for the most part of stringy, weedy muttons, bred for their wool, and offering scanty attractions to the butcher. The horses are overworked and under-fed. The goats, like the camels, suffer little from neglect, and would probably flourish if set adrift on a raft in the Dead Sea. Even as it is, the fruit and crops are wonderful, but with improved methods and machinery the output of Asia Minor

could feed the whole of the empire. The fruit is superb. Such cherries, mulberries, apricots, peaches, figs, and filberts are grown round every village as are rarely seen in England save in West-End shops in London. Among other important objects of cultivation, mention may be made of the sweet barley, in great demand among Munich brewers, maize, poppies (for opium), and tobacco, and the silk industry flourishes everywhere, millions of cocoons being exported to Lyons or Damascus, while smaller quantities are purchased for the home factories at Héréké and Brousa.

Ismidt lies rather more than fifty miles from Constantinople, along the Chemin de Fer d'Anatolie, or, as we call it for short, the "Bagdad Railway." The train starts from Haidar Pacha, and, running through Erenkeuy and other fashionable suburbs on the seashore, skirts the north shore of the Gulf of Ismidt and passes through Darijeh, Héréké, and Dérinjé. At Darijeh, which I visited more than once, there are two very conspicuous cypresses, beneath which, after committing suicide, Hannibal is said to have been buried. Héréké is the site of the Imperial silk and cloth factory. By the courtesy of Noury Bey, Minister of the Civil List, I was shown over this establishment, and found hundreds of little Greek maidens singing merrily as they

wove beautiful carpets from designs by native artists in an adjoining building. In the cloth factory, an annexe of much more recent date, they were turning out fezes by the thousand in response to a demand that has been occasioned by the boycott of Austria, which had hitherto supplied these national caps in millions. It cannot be claimed that Turkey availed itself of this chance to create a home industry and oust a foreign one as fully as it might have, but Héréké certainly benefited to no small extent by the temporary demand. Its profits were no doubt diminished by a movement which substituted the black *kalpeck* for the red fez.

Dérinjé was once the most flourishing grain port in Asia Minor, but the authorities have for reasons of their own transferred its trade to Haidar Pacha, the magnificent grain elevators on the quay are idle, and the place recalls Hawthorn's account of Salem. The only parallel case of "Ichabod" that I saw on my travels was Batoum, where the revolution has all but killed the once splendid petroleum industry. The word "Dérinjé" means "deeps," and the largest vessels used to come alongside the quay. Alas! they no longer do so, and the rare arrival of one of Messrs. Whittall's steamers, calling for logs or chrome, causes a flutter of excitement in the little

colony, which once was used to the sight of foreign flags at the quay all through the year.

Half a mile to the west of Dérinjé—which consists only of a railway station, an hotel, also the property (like everything else) of the railway company, and a cluster of official buildings, the residence of the portmaster and other employees —is a ruined kiosk built by the Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz in the eighteen-sixties, and, since then, visited by none of the ruling house. How should it be when, after he himself had died a violent death, one nephew was kept in durance for thirty years as an alleged lunatic, while another sat still longer on the throne of Osman, but kept himself shut up in Yildiz during that period, so fearful was he of the vengeance that he alone knew how richly he deserved! The quiet old kiosk was a favourite haunt of mine, and the caretaker, a grizzled veteran of more than seventy years, would sit and smoke cigarettes, or fidget happily about, while I wrung such music as was possible out of an old French cottage piano that had stood untouched, untuned, uncared for, ever since the days when Aziz held high revel in those halls. Other music had mocked its silence since those better times. The love lays of darkling nightingales in the coppice, the harsh chatter of slimy frogs in the swamps, the irritating clapping

of storks' bills on the roof, the harrowing howl of jackals in the foothills, even the hum of wild bees that had swarmed unrebuked in a neighbouring room amid frescoes and brocades, all these had broken its spirit. Truly, spiders have spun in the palaces of kings! And the kiosk lies forgotten within hearing of the moaning waves, only its flagstaff showing above the summer screen of limes and plane trees. Its very existence was ignored by Prince Mejid, son of him who built it, and when I told him of the painted ceilings, he, who is an artist of no small talent, resolved, with the greater liberty accorded him now that the tyrant of the family is *en villegiature* at Salonika, that he would take an early opportunity of seeing it for himself.

Close to the kiosk, and, like it, Civil List property, is a large farm, which owns a couple of thousand sheep and produces silk and tobacco. The Armenian overseer gave me a depressing account of farming under present conditions, and even an English farmer might have come away from such a recital of woes filled with contentment with his own lot.

Ismidt itself, though the ancient Nikomedia, and therefore associated with genial memories of the ferocious Diocletian, who renounced the delights of sovereignty and persecuting Christians

in order to turn philosopher, is not at the present day a very interesting city. Its dominating feature is a long boulevard, planted with tall trees, through which the trains run on their way to Konia. The bazaars are small and appear to be chiefly tenanted by Armenians. One "United Armenian," who kept a confectionary shop, weighed about twenty stone. The only human being I ever met whose figure could compare with his for splendid generosity, was one whom I sometimes recall gratefully over a glass of port. He used to go a-shooting in a cart, and, for his size, shot remarkably well. The Armenian preferred fishing, and I more than once encountered his gigantic frame in a small caïque rowed by a small and suffering countryman over my favourite bass ground at Solujak. He never to my knowledge caught a bass, but his patience was inexhaustible. There is also a garrison at Ismidt, and when I first visited the Gulf, in April, the troops were installed in the ex-cholera hospital at Solujak, with the object of stopping trains and arresting deserters, who were just then very numerous. Every train from the city was stopped and searched from engine to brake, and a dozen riflemen would stand across the line while officers went through the compartments. On one occasion, a haul of over eighty was made by a trick

often practised with success in British Consulates of the Levant when an applicant for aid is suspected of having deserted from Malta. It was a very full train, and practically all the occupants were in civilian attire. They were turned out on the track and suddenly ordered to make the *teminah*, or salute. Now the manner of saluting among civilians consists in touching the ground, or at any rate your own leg near the foot, and then the head, the idea, I suppose, being that you humbly put the dust from under some exalted personage's feet on your own head. The military salute, on the other hand, is much the same as in other armies, and on this occasion, taken unawares, eighty-four of the *soi-disant* civilians so far forgot themselves as to give the military salute, and were forthwith arrested. This recalls the old story, which my friend the Colonel at Solujak appreciated, in which a member of a well-known London club wagered that one of the waiters was an old soldier. The unconscious object of the bet approached the table with two steaming plates of soup, when the word—shun! made the wretched pensioner drop the plates and stand at attention!

Twenty miles farther along the line gleams the Lake of Sabanja, a fine sheet of water ten miles long and two or three at its greatest

width. Its wooded shores are a noted haunt of wild boar and woodcock, and many sportsmen come to shoot in the winter. The summer fishing is less known, but the lake is very full of pike, perch, wels, and a number of forms like our roach and carp. It is also the home of a crayfish which makes excellent soup. The population on the shores of Lake Sabanja is very varied, but the different elements keep to themselves. At the western extremity of the lake is the village of Buyuk Derbend, inhabited by Circassians from the Caucasus, to one of whom, Hassan Chaoush, I carried, as already mentioned, a letter of introduction which neither he nor I could read. These Circassians have two claims to fame: they are unequalled as horse-thieves, and their women are very beautiful. I had no opportunity of judging their merits on either count, as I had no horse for them to practise their sleight of hand on, and they kept the ladies carefully veiled. At the station of Sabanja, a little village of gardens and avenues, I found Turks and Armenians living in unusual harmony, possibly owing to the civilising influence of the railroad. Esmé (or Eshmé?), on the north shore of the lake, is divided into two villages, the Greek and the Turkish, separated only by an orchard, though socially as far apart

as Balham and Belgravia. The Greeks think themselves superior, and the Turks know they are, so what would you? In the Turkish village, which I visited in the evening, I saw a flour-mill that might have survived from the days of the Conqueror, and I also saw a little dream of a child, with auburn hair and the bluest of green eyes, whose face would cause a stampede in the large room of the Academy, that home of art in which well-bred people behave like gladiators. The Greek quarter was overrun with silkworms, which swarmed in every cottage, fattening on layers of mulberry leaves and about to spin their silk on the oak branches then being gathered for the purpose. Talking the matter over with the Greek waterman who gave me quarters, I calculated that he would realise about £20 by the sale of his cocoons in the open market, no bad return for the very slight capital invested. Occasionally fish are sent to Ismidt, or even to Constantinople, by rail; but the supply is chiefly bought up in the village, so that the industry is a very quiet one, and the men of Esmé are not burdened with riches. Yet they certainly raise enormous families. As tourists are rare in those parts, I was the object of a flattering curiosity on the part of quite a hundred budding Levantines, in

whose little veins, I imagine, the Hellene brew runs very thin. In the Turkish village, on the other hand, I did not see more than twenty children all told. That is the burden of the Turk's complaint against restricting military service to true believers, and a very just objection it is. These "Greeks," he tells you, stay at home and raise families while we go to remote parts of the empire and fight, and at this rate there will soon be no Turks in Turkey at all. But they are going to change all that.

This isolation of Turks, Greeks, and Armenians, each in their own villages, is also characteristic of the south shore of the Gulf of Ismidt, and, undesirable as it may be from the standpoint of welding all such racial elements into one nation with the same political ideals, irrespective of creed, it works best in the meanwhile for the public peace. At Baktchéjik, for instance, which lies opposite Ismidt, we have only Armenians, whose dwellings cover the face of a hill, at the top of which is a Mission, nominally American, but actually conducted by Canadians and English people, and, at the time of my visit, nestling under the Union Jack, which looked homely amid those green hills. These enthusiasts labour bravely and with excellent results, not at the futile purpose of converting Moslems to Christi-

anity, but with the more promising object of educating Protestant Armenians to a sense of their duties under the new *régime*. These hitherto oppressed people know quite enough about their rights as Ottoman subjects, and those who now rule Turkey know perfectly well that there must be no more Adanas. What the Armenians want teaching is the proper realisation of their responsibilities. I am not a wild admirer of many of the Armenians whom I met in the land, and I will unhesitatingly say (even though such a suggestion will not be popular with the ladies who read it) that they have exploited the martyrdom of their race to its full value. Yet I do think that such influence as Dr. Chambers and Miss Newnham are able to exercise on the rising generation at Baktchéjik is a good influence, and likely to bear ripe fruit in the near future, when we may even hear of Armenian youths anxious to take their rightful place in the national army, not merely, as hitherto, to evade paying the tax, but with an honest ambition to bear their share in the defence of the fatherland. Indeed, from what I was told at the Mission, it seems that the martial spirit is not wholly wanting in that race, as at the time of the Adana troubles the lads came back to school armed, without exception, and

bearing a miscellany of obsolete weapons which should have gone into the nearest museum. Turkey has so far proved but a stepmother to them, but, with their arch-enemy safe under lock and key, they may in a brighter future be her sons in more than name. It was a curious sensation to sit in the cool room, perched in the hills of Anatolia, surrounded by English books and engravings, and to drink tea with those enthusiasts who had cut themselves off from civilisation in order to do the work which lay ready to their hands. There are corners of the tropics where I have come across missionaries who are a disgrace to their order, and of many others it could, at the best, be said that they were doing no harm. Here, however, in this muddy backwater of humanity, it really looks as if sound educational work were being done. Surely the education of the native is the better part of the missionary's work. As Meredith said: "Culture is half-way to Heaven."

Deirmenderé, which lies about four miles farther west, and which has already been mentioned in these pages, is wholly Turkish. If, as has been alleged, the inhabitants were unfriendly to Europeans in comparatively recent times, they have undergone a remarkable change, for I found them unfailingly courteous, and I

must have landed there a score of times, since I never could come within scent of the Arab *cafeji's* brew without running ashore for at least three cups of coffee. Turkish coffee is not, like so much of that drunk in this country, a watery decoction of chicory. It is made in little brass pots with long handles, and these are stood, with a little water, among the glowing embers. A spoonful of coffee ground very fine is sufficient, and care is taken not to let the water boil over. Then the whole is transferred to a tiny cup, in which the grounds soon settle. Turks drink their coffee very sweet, but this can be regulated according to taste. Deirmenderé is hidden in orchards scarlet with cherries. I used to watch them ripening day after day, and at last bought my fill (it is a good fill) for a penny the pound. At the last they were even cheaper, and, as it was, half a dozen boats would sail across to the railway at Tutun Chiflik, laden to the water's edge. The fruitfulness of Deirmenderé is in great measure due to the abundance of running water, which comes singing down from the beautiful hills behind the village. Nature does not distribute her favours evenly in this respect. At Dérinjé, too, thanks in great measure to the splendid system of storage inaugurated by the railway company, we always had as much

water as we knew what to do with; but Baktchéjik, on the other hand, suffers terribly from drought. There is a picturesqueness about Deirmenderé that is not, I think, to be found in any other village on the Gulf. To sit under the trees and watch the men sail in and out in their great native craft, some of which had such curved prows as might have served Jason when he set out for the Golden Fleece; to listen to the banter round the tables; to bargain, only half in earnest, for fruit or lobsters; above all, a little later in the summer, to watch Ahmed Ihsan propounding the new ideas to these somewhat unreceptive minds,—these were the dear delights of summer days I shall never recall without regret. Well, summer has its ending, and we who are doomed to shiver through a northern winter can only bask in the glow of retrospect.

Still farther westward on that southern shore of the Gulf we come to Ghonja, a Greek village, with the inevitable waterside drinking-shops at which Levantines love to sip continuous *mastic* (an intoxicant flavoured with gum mastic) at a penny a glass, just to spur their jaded appetites, like clubmen at home, with their something-and-bitters before meals. These Greeks are passionate gamblers (yet not so fond of the gaming-table

OLD TURKISH CRAFT, DEIRMENDERÉ.

These high-prowed boats are of the type common in the Marmora and Black Sea, and are engaged in the coasting trade in the Gulf of Ismidt and elsewhere. They ply daily to the opposite shore, carrying loads of cherries from Deirmenderé to a station on the Bagdad Railway for transport to Constantinople.

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as the Armenians), and on a Sunday morning I have seen every little vine-covered casino thronged with card-players and reeking of *mastic*, while the few Mohammedans in the place would stalk gravely by, with a not wholly unmerited contempt for the dogs who made strong drink and hazard the business of their Sabbath.

For six weeks or more I made Dérinjé my headquarters, and never perhaps, in a varied experience of living at the back of beyond for the sake of sport, have I been more agreeably disappointed with what seemed most unpromising material. Most nights, towards the latter half of my stay, I slept in the little caïque, as the Whittalls always do when fishing; and it is in itself no bad tribute to the temper of those seas and to the climate of those skies that two men of respectable bulk should be able to sleep in perfect comfort in a small open boat night after night. I had rooms at the Hotel de la Gare, an unpretentious but roomy hostelry close to the station, and, like all else in the place, owned by the railway company, though the tenant was a Greek of Ismidt, who was most obliging, and who spoke eighteen words of French with the accent of Anatolia. The staff consisted of two Greeks, a cook (in the days of Dérinjé's affluence, he was the local butcher, and he retained three goats as the residue of his stock

in trade), and a waiter. None of these spoke anything but the Greek of their kind, as a result of which my holiday was not without those trials which only a sense of humour enables the traveller to bear equably. Indeed, but for the friendly aid of the Austrian Portmaster and Italian Station-master, both of whom were indefatigable in saving me from the worst, there would have been blood-shed. Left to my own devices, I used to get rice milk when I asked for mustard, and a clean pillow-case when I roared for shaving water. Here, in fact, I learnt the curse of Babel, though a smattering of four languages had hitherto kept me above the surface, and I marvelled once again at the hardihood with which the very insular undauntedly plan their annual fortnight on the Continent. The fare provided at Dérinjé was elemental, yet a little foraging provided the table with the freshest of lobsters and red mullet, fowls that had not lost the first bloom of youth, with native honey and cream, while the Portmaster sent me daily supplies of fruit from his extraordinary garden. In addition to such local aids, the Co-operative Stores in Constantinople kept me in Danish butter, Scotch whisky, and English biscuits. I could not get to love the native bread, and had to school myself to eat cold lobster or hot chicken with *Petit Beurre* biscuits.

The *Petit Beurre* is about the only European biscuit in general use throughout the Near East, and, as the native butter is too bad for anything but cartwheels, the name is agreeable. Yet there was a Hungarian butter, sold in red wrappers at Pera, of which, so delicious was its flavour, I could never bring myself to use only a little. Hungarian butter and Servian beef! to such importations has the apathy of the native producer driven tradesmen in the cities. The Turks are not adepts in the making of cakes or other pastry. The only preparation of the kind that I can recall is a circular wafer, much sold in the railway stations, and with about as much nourishment in it as a baked whisper might have.

The fisheries of the Gulf of Ismidt are chiefly in the hands of Armenians. A few Greeks are also seen in the fishing-boats, but they keep for the most part to the open Marmora, just as the Turkish fishermen are found chiefly up the Bosphorus and in the Black Sea. The principal net in local use is the "talian," an abbreviation of "Italian," from the real or supposed origin, a grant by a former Sultan to a favourite Italian. The rights have in the course of time been let and sub-let until the original documents, for which I made a vain search in several likely quarters, have probably been lost sight of. Yet

the claims of the present tenants, or lessees, have always been strictly observed, and other boats are careful to give the neighbourhood of a "talian" a wide berth. The principle is simple. A look-out man stationed on a raised platform, which is also constructed in some of their boats, sees a shoal of fishes swim into the inner square of the net and promptly pulls a rope, thereby closing the exit, while he hails the men ashore to man the boat and remove the catch. I imagine that, even with his pitcher of water always replenished, the life of the sentinel through a burning summer's day is no enviable one, but I never yet saw one sleep at his post even in the hottest hours, and indeed the patience of the Oriental is something beyond the Western understanding. There are several of these nets in the Gulf, the largest of them at Ismidt itself, and a smaller, with the crew of which I was on the most friendly terms all the summer, between Dérinjé and Solujak. I used often to run ashore at their invitation and drink coffee or eat a crisply baked mackerel, done in the embers, and very excellent eating; though what they found to amuse them in my company, seeing that I did not speak more than a dozen words that they could understand, always puzzled me. One should not, however, be too analytical on such occasions. Popularity is too rare a flower

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ARMENIAN FISHERMEN.

The *reis* (or captain) on the look-out is very clever in watching the movements of shoals and directing his crew. These men fish in the Gulf of Ismidt during the early part of the year, working a "talian" and sleeping in a stone barn. In July they move to Pendik, on the Sea of Marmora, for some weeks of different fishing.

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to dissect, and I accepted their flattering attentions as if I deserved them, occasionally requiting their simple hospitality by purchasing a lobster or a few fresh *palamit*, or by allowing them to fire half a dozen cartridges out of my automatic pistol. Their shooting was not of the Winans standard, but they derived great enjoyment from missing a square foot of matchboard at thirty paces. The *reis*, or captain, who is seen in the photograph standing on the look-out, was a fine old fellow, and the authority which he exercised over his unruly rabble was wonderful. Many of them could have strangled him without much effort, but I have heard him rebuke them in Armenian, so fluent in its periods and so potent in its effect, as to need no interpreting. The fish caught in these "talians" are mostly small mackerel called *chiri*, but they sometimes attract a shoal of large *palamit*, or horse-mackerel; and on one occasion, at Cartal, which is on the mainland, opposite the eastern extremity of Prinkipo, I saw a small shoal of tunny, nine in number, slaughtered by excitable Greeks commanded by a fury of a man who several times seemed on the verge of apoplexy. Yet he did the work of three, and the strength with which he would haul the floundering, bleeding form of a three-hundred-pounder on a bale-hook was out of all proportion to his

physique. A few trammels (*plimati*) are shot for red mullet, not as at home, laid down at night and taken up next morning, but put out and hauled forthwith, stones being thrown around to frighten the sulking fish into the meshes. The only other net in use is the seine (*grippe*), which the fishermen shoot round the shoals of grey mullet or mackerel. Hook and line fishing is not practised to any extent for either pleasure or profit. A few of the Greeks of Pendik and the neighbouring hamlets use this method for supplying the market with bass or bream, but only on a very limited scale. In fact, the Gulf of Ismidt has miles of virgin fishing-grounds, and even if it were more actively exploited there would always be sanctuary for the fish in the deep water, where their only enemies would still be the porpoises, which, with pelicans and herons, levy the chief tribute to-day.

It was with a heavy heart that I bade farewell to the Gulf, for a more lovely backwater for sport and idleness I never drifted on. One of these days Dérinjé and some of the other villages will be invaded by the crowd, and wonder will then be expressed that such ideal resorts for a May outing were not discovered sooner. Well, I may not be able to fish those waters again, but I shall have been there

before the rush, and that is something to be grateful for.

At present the holiday crowds go to the Princes' Islands, or to one or other of the Greek villages, Pendik or Cartal, on the Marmora. For ordinary purposes of a change from the city, these no doubt serve the purpose, but the sea-fisherman may be advised to give them all a wide berth. He will be led to expect great things (I was), and he will find mortification of the spirit (I did). If Pendik and its kind could be kept cleaner, with a more efficient system of drainage and repression of live stock, they would be pleasant enough for an idle fortnight, as the Marmora is a capital summer sea for yachting and small boating, and there is just enough second-rate fishing to satisfy the not too fastidious tripper. Unfortunately, the vermin of these villages is in possession everywhere, and I found the bed in the hotel at Pendik, which has a Parisian reputation among the unsophisticated Greeks of the locality, so full of something even more unmentionable than the downright bug, that after one sleepless night on my luggage I hurriedly took once more to the caïque, less comfortable in the open sea than in the sheltered Gulf, but at any rate not the happy hunting-ground of *Pediculus*. The bass do not run large,

and it is a case of better fifty hours of Ismidt than a season of Pendik. The same may be said of Prinkipo, the largest and most fashionable of the Princes' Islands, which lie off the coast of Asia Minor, four of them inhabited and as many more devoid of human dwellings, in a line. They were so called after the ancient Emperors, though whether because the princes resorted there for pleasure, or because they and their princesses were so often sent there to keep them out of mischief, seems doubtful. They have always been favourite and convenient places of durance. The dogs of Constantinople were once put on one of them, and when I first visited Prinkipo, in March, it was the place of detention of the famous State Prisoners, members of the Yildiz gang, who have since paid ransom or gone into remoter exile. They were given splendid houses and the use of their carriages and servants, so that, short of further opportunities of robbery, they had a not unenviable time of it. I saw one of them entering his carriage with one of the harem, and a Turkish friend with me remarked: "*Voilà, un escroc qui va visiter un voleur!*"

Prinkipo is a pretty island, and I spent a sunny fortnight there, keeping the caïque for bathing and sailing, and staying at the Hotel Giacomo, which, though not wholly unknown to the more

enterprising insects of the island, was a great improvement on Pendik. It has since been burnt to the ground. The daily life of the holiday season is one of very subdued activities. The Levantines bathe, if at all, late in the morning, in becoming costumes and before an audience. No audience, no bathe. The same publicity is also preferred for their aquatics, which consist in paddling about in small boats, the sportsmen wearing high collars, waistcoats that would have delighted Dickens, exclamatory ties, and patent leather shoes. Such free-and-easy attire as flannels and canvas shoes are considered too unconventional, and I fancy that at first they took me for one of a yacht's crew. That, however, did not matter, as yachting is an honoured pastime in those waters. There is even a yacht club at Prinkipo. It has, incidentally, no yachts, but it has a smart burgee of its own and pretty grounds, in which the members, smartly dressed, dine, flirt, and gamble every evening. A genial Armenian acquaintance offered, as a great favour (and as such, poor soul, he regarded it), to get me a card of temporary membership, assuring me that it was *très amusant pour le dîner et un peu de flirt.* To what fearsome lengths, in such attractive company, *un peu de flirt* might go, I never dared to inquire, much less learn at first hand.

I was able to decline the proffered honour on the excellent grounds that I had no evening clothes with me at the time. When lack of a dress suit is a good and sufficient reason for not joining a yacht club, further comment on the yacht club is perhaps superfluous. Yet anyone in search of a week's rest in the company of his own species might do worse than spend it at Prinkipo. He ought, however, to be up at five, and to ride round the island by the lower road on one of the stout little ponies which can be hired for the purpose for a dollar.

Then he should bathe from the private jetty of his hotel, or, better still, since the water round the island is not always innocent of sewage, from a boat. The other islands and the mainland are within easy sailing distance when there is a breeze, but it must be confessed that there is more often than not no wind at all, or, when it blows, it is in the wrong quarter. This, perhaps, is the true explanation of the peculiar objects of the yacht club.

There are also one or two delightful resorts on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, such as Candili, though the rank and fashion go to Therapia, on the European side, and there change their raiment six times daily and bask in the reflected glory of the Embassies. The Bosphorus

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THE TOWERS OF EUROPE.

These round towers have been a conspicuous landmark on the heights above Bebek ever since they were built by Mohammed the Conqueror in 1452, in his earlier operations against Constantinople. The Turks call them *Rumeli Hissar*, or Castle of Roumelia, to distinguish them from the *Anadoli Hissar*, or Castle of Asia, on the other shore of the Bosphorus. When this picture was taken, in early March, the heights were draped in snow.

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is just a lovely saltwater river, a dream of beauty in the spring of the year, when its shores are hung with carpets of wild flowers, or even in winter when the snow lies thick on the Towers of Europe. Unfortunately, its currents are swift and dangerous, and those who are unfamiliar with them should never go afloat without a local waterman.

Scutari, on the Asiatic shore, is a most interesting quarter of the city, inhabited for the most part by Turks, who have here their great cemetery. Its roads, once excellent, are sadly out of repair, and I cherish few memories of travel more reluctantly than that of a jolting jaunt one hot August morning in one of the little one-horse cabs with my esteemed friend Ali Noury Bey, who is built even more elaborately than myself. He also, I dare swear, will not soon forget the condition in which we arrived at the waterside, there to charter a caïque for Stamboul, a slender craft which our combined *okes* sank far below the line where Mr. Plimsoll would have scratched his *ne plus ultra.*

CHAPTER VI

THE BLACK SEA AND THE CAUCASUS

Buckle on Turk and Russian — Trip on the *Sidon* — The Guns of Kavak — Character of the Black Sea — A Persian Prince and a Turkish Refugee — Flies at Samsoun — Its Future — The Lazes — A Turkish Proverb — Bathing in the Black Sea — Beauty of Kerassund — "Harbours" — Trebizond — Turkey's National Fête — The Commandant — A Fire — Retreat of Xenophon — "*Renégats!*" — A Hospitable Laze — In Russian Waters — Medical and Police Inspection at Batoum — Decline of the Port — Revolt of the Caucasus — Anglo-Russian Policy in Persia — Sunday at Batoum — Ladies' Bathing-Place — Train to Tiflis — Scenery by the Way — A Russian Railway Story — Comfortable Hotel at Tiflis — Native Wines of the Caucasus — Police Inquisition — The Policy of Bluff — A Military Museum — *Consul Britannicus Sum* — Appearance of Tiflis — Its Gardens and Museum — A Persian Bath — Wine-Shops in the Tartar Quarter — The Sheepskin Cap — The Georgians — A Wedding-Feast — Georgian and Armenian — A Byzantine Breakwater.

In his not unreasonable disapproval of the Crimean War, Mr. Buckle compared the uncivilised Russian and still more uncivilised Turk. This was impolite on his part, but when did historians ever stand on ceremony? I am fortunately absolved from instituting comparison between the two; but those who would see them

RIVER KURA, TIFLIS.

A bridge is on the Kura; in winter, as in summer, from the driftwood on the banks, a raging torrent; in summer, a more rivulet of not very clean water. The summer appearance of the walls of Tiflis, the reverse of imposing.

RIVER KURA, TIFLIS.

A typical river of the Near East; in winter, as is evident from the driftwood on the banks, a raging torrent; in summer, a mere rivulet of not too clean water. Its summer aspect beneath the walls of Tiflis is the reverse of imposing.

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in juxtaposition can easily do so by taking one of the *Messageries* boats from Constantinople along the southern shore of the Black Sea as far as Batoum, and thence proceeding by train to Tiflis, capital of the Caucasus and headquarters of revolted Georgia. In summer-time there is, I think, no other side-track in the Near East where the idler can spend a fortnight to such good purpose, and if the result of so brief a survey should tempt him to revise Buckle's estimate, I shall not wonder at his verdict.

On a perfect July evening the *Sidon* steamed up the Bosphorus, past the summer quarters of Diplomacy at Therapia, and under the guns of Kavak, on the Asiatic shore, which, it was whispered at the time, were prepared to make short work of the embassies if any attempt were made to coerce the garrison into acceptance of the *régime* of Mahmoud Chevket. Whether this story had any truth in it, who can say? Constantinople is a perfect duck-decoy when *canards* are on the wing, and every hour has its rumours. Yet the report of disaffection behind the guns of Kavak, true or not, made them more interesting as we passed at sunset.

The Black Sea was in one of its rare smiling moods. All through the winter, and too often even in summer-time, this sea is black in character as

in name, and first thoughts were best when the Greeks named it *Ἄξεινος Πόντος*. The change to *Εὔξεινος* was base flattery which it has ill repaid. With no island to break its surface, with no harbour, save Batoum, along its southern shore, it is at its best no paradise for seamen, and at its worst their purgatory. Seeing that, for east-bound ships at any rate, it is a *cul de sac*, the amount of shipping encountered is considerable. The south coast is beautiful, but the lack of harbours makes communication with the shore usually uncomfortable and often dangerous. I was more than once reminded of the plight of Jason and his sailors in the *Argo*, of whom Morris tells us :

> " . . . But when on the next day
> They gathered at the port to go away,
> The wind was foul and boisterous, so perforce
> There must they bide, lest they should come to worse."

On that occasion, if I remember right, the adventurous Greeks were detained for a fortnight ; and even nowadays it is no uncommon experience for the French boats, with a more exacting time schedule and better machinery than theirs, to lie rolling off Trebizond for two or three days together. After which, when the gale shows no sign of abating, they proceed on their troubled way to Batoum or the Bosphorus with closed

hatches. The Euxine resembles no other sea of my travels, east or west. The closest analogy I remember is that of the Baltic, but the more northern sea is studded with islands, and its depth nowhere much exceeds a hundred fathoms, whereas the Black Sea goes down more than a thousand. In neither are the waves very high. As has been demonstrated, the waves of a sea are high in proportion to its length, and it could not therefore be expected that the Black Sea should run "mountains high" like the open Atlantic. But, though of modest stature, its waves hit hard, and its outbursts of temper, if of short duration, are terrific while they last, and the gales come whistling down the Bosphorus laden with blinding snow, in which they drape Constantinople, from Scutari to the Sweet Waters of Europe, in the course of a few hours.

On this excursion up the Black Sea the passengers included two individuals characteristic of the curious patchwork of humanity one meets at this junction of the continents. The first was Prince Amir Aézame, a Persian, and the other was a Turkish refugee under sentence of hanging. The Prince was a merry fellow, warmly attached to England, where he had spent two years in exile. He had found his way into the bad books of the Shah for having refused to order his

regiment to fire on the refractory Parliament. This was most unreasonable on his part, particularly as he had many friends and relatives among the deputies. Anyhow, the Shah took his refusal in bad part and wanted to have his head on a charger; but the Prince, forewarned in the nick of time, found asylum at the British Residency and was smuggled out of the country a day or two later. He had made his way straight to London and had lived modestly in a Bloomsbury boarding-house. He had not in that time acquired much fluency in English, but he knew enough French as "spoke atte Teheran" for us to make friends, and he had a variety of native delicacies, from Turkish Delight to preserved oranges, with which he continually plied me. His rank was not known to me until the last morning. I had noticed, however, that one of his attendants, a brawny fellow—who played such mournful airs on the ship's piano that I thought they were the official music for royal funerals; but he assured me that they were passionate love lays, which shows that the almond-eyed beauties of Iran must take their pleasures sadly —was repeatedly being struck by him, though only in play, without hitting back, and this gave me the idea that he might be someone of importance. On the last morning, therefore, when

he asked me to wear an elaborate jewelled chain (the idea was to get it past the Customs, but I frightened him by protesting that our acquaintance had been too brief for my acceptance of such a bauble), I replied, "*Bien sure, mon Prince!*" "Why," he asked, "do you call me a Prince? Do I look like one?"

Anxious to draw him, I replied frankly that he did not. Whereupon—childish, like all his race—he promptly sent the muscular musician for a gold cardcase and presented me with his card, very handsomely inviting me to come with him to Teheran and have a good time. In view of the rate at which history was made in that city a little later, there would certainly have been no lack of excitement.

The Turkish refugee, a young fellow of perhaps two-and-twenty summers, was a very different type. At first, we thought that he must be a lunatic. Though seemingly an excellent sailor, he spent most of his time in his cabin, even taking his meals there. He would emerge, like an owl, with the moon, and on the first night he paced for half an hour or more outside my deck cabin. Irritated by the sound, I put my head out of the port, and he, catching sight of me, fled softly below and never showed his face again. It had been his intention to escape

through Russian territory, but, his steward having informed him that the Russian police would, in the absence of papers, merely detain him and send him back to Stamboul, possibly in the fullness of time to adorn a gibbet, he slipped away one daybreak to a *Paquet* boat homeward bound from Trebizond, meaning, no doubt, to lie *perdu* in his berth until she was through Turkish waters. No doubt he is now at large in London or Paris, and, if there is any truth in the steward's story that he had a couple of hundred thousand francs in notes and gold, he should still be enjoying the change of air. Well, it was one more mouse out of the trap. He was too young to have done much harm himself, though no doubt he had shared the plunder of those who had robbed the nation. I fancy I learnt the secret of his identity in Constantinople a fortnight later, but I am not his keeper, and there can be no object in publishing his name after all this lapse of time.

Early on the third day the steamer anchors off Samsoun, and passengers can go ashore and sit in the shady streets and drink excellent coffee. It is a feast of flies, for they fall into your coffee and walk into your mouth. Samsoun, a place of some antiquity, is still of secondary importance as a port; but one of these days it will come

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THE LAZE HEAD-DRESS.

This curious headgear, neither cap nor turban, but an intermediate form, is worn by the Lazes, though this is an unusually elaborate style, the tassel being as a rule dispensed with, and the material wound about the head rather like a puttee. This youth is probably a Mohammedan Georgian. Many of the Georgians were induced to embrace Islam when their country was overrun by Mongols and Persians.

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rapidly to the front, as an American syndicate has lately secured a concession to build a railroad into the interior, which may eventually creep towards our Indian frontier. It is a far cry, but, looked at on the map, does not appear outside the bounds of practical politics. Much depends on the future of Persia. At present, Samsoun is an elementary sort of place. The only mode of getting produce to market is in bullock-carts. The carts are of antiquated pattern, picturesque rather than efficient, their solid wheels carved with quaint devices ; and the bullocks are miserable little beasts, not much more than half the size of some I remembered near Ismidt. The shore-boats, on the other hand, are superb, built with the high prow about which we used to read at school in the Greek hour. As there is no harbour, there can obviously be no tug, and the brawny Lazes who man these craft have to tow yet heavier lighters loaded to the water's edge. These Lazes are a powerful race. In other days they earned a wild reputation as pirates, and I doubt whether they have even now quite lost the Barbarossa touch. Wireless telegraphy and steam, however, with other disabilities of an age with no soul for romance, have sadly discounted the profession of corsair, so the Lazes have settled down as workaday watermen, and hundreds

of them are domiciled in Constantinople as *mahonajis*, or lightermen. The type can be recognised at a glance: fine physique and handsome, aquiline face, with a distinctive head-gear not unlike a cloth puttee wound about the crown. Even in the reformed state, this race has not earned a good name with its neighbours, for the Turks have a rhyming proverb, which may be translated to mean that the cheapest of all fruits is the cherry (*keraz*), the silliest of all birds the goose (*kaze*), and the lowest of all nations the Laze.

The slender attractions of Samsoun were exhausted long before the *Sidon* had parted with her last bale of cotton, so I took the opportunity to have the first of many swims in the Black Sea, the water of which is warm, and not very salt to the taste.

The same evening the steamer makes a brief halt at Kerassund, with which, however, I made closer acquaintance on the return voyage. With the single exception of Ineboli, which lies farther west, this is the most beautiful port on that coast. It rises in terraces to a road round the brow of the hill, from the summit of which the eye rests on a sea panorama that might, if the tell-tale minarets were but the roofs of Bible Christian chapels, be a Cornish bay, with the pilchard

KERASSUND, BLACK SEA.

One of the most picturesque towns on the southern shore of the Black Sea, its blue bays and mountainous background are curiously suggestive of a scene in North Devon. Like its neighbours in that part of Anatolia, it does an important export trade in eggs, though the Euxine is sometimes so rough for days together that communication between the shore and the ships of the *Messageries Maritimes* Line is not possible, as there is neither harbour nor tug-boat for the lighters.

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fleet hourly expected round the next point. The population appears to consist largely of Greeks, and the chief industry is that of the hens, which lay eggs by the million for export in foreign holds.

The fourth sunrise finds us lying off Trebizond The opportunity of visiting a new town each day is the abiding charm of this Black Sea trip, and the only parallel I know is the Royal Mail journey down the coast of Morocco. Sunrise, then, found us off the ancient Trapezium, and sunset also, for this was Turkey's first anniversary of the downfall of tyranny, the *Fête Nationale*, and not a stroke of work would the lightermen do that day. Such delay did not enlist our sympathies for *Hurriet*.[1] Nor, in truth, was the celebration a more than half-hearted affair. Few of the Faithful seemed to have any idea of what they were commemorating. All they knew was that hard work was officially taboo for the day, *Hamdullah*! Also that loyalty to the Constitution (whatever that might mean) could be expressed in cups of coffee and cigarettes. Again, *Hamdullah*! I say nothing of glasses of *raki*, for did not the genial Ahmet Pacha, the Military Commandant of all the district, tell me, as we

[1] This word means Liberty! With *Adalet* (justice) it is the watchward of the Constitution.

drank coffee and I complimented him on the orderly behaviour of the citizens, that they did not get drunk as they would have done in Europe? After that touching reminder of home, sweet home, I felt that there was nothing more to be said. At any rate, the rejoicings were not disgraced by such scenes as I witnessed at Seattle on the Glorious Fourth, or in Havana on the Hysterical Twentieth. There was no inclination to throw lighted squibs at the bullocks, or to tie lighted crackers to the legs of live crabs, a diversion at which I once surprised a merry gang of Cubanos, students, I was told, who belonged to the best families in the island. How the members of the *worst* families of Cuba amuse themselves on public holidays I did not stop to inquire. All that happened at Trebizond was a stoppage of work, and even this did not appeal to everyone, for an aged boatman, in response to my inquiry whether there would be any more *fantasia* and fireworks next day, said, with an unmistakable gesture of relief, "*Yok Effendi. Bitti!*" (No, Sir. Enough of it!)

So the Commandant reviewed the garrison, and the garrison fired some cannon. Then in the evening there were mild fireworks, and a rocket fell on a house and set it, with its neighbours, in a blaze. Had this been Constantinople,

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TREBIZOND.

The ancient Trapezium, which figures in the retreat of Xenophon and his Greeks, as also in the travels of Marco Polo. Hereabouts is the country where Jason sought the Golden Fleece. Nowadays, Trebizond is an ordinary Turkish walled town, with shady avenues and public gardens. It will, one of these days, be the terminus of an important railroad from the interior of Armenia.

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with its wooden hovels, half the place would have been burned to the ground; but the men of Trebizond build with stone, and so the flames were cheated of more than a snack. It was at Trebizond that Xenophon and his heroes, after fighting their way through Armenian snows, got back to the sea. They must have been hardy knaves if the roads out of the town were no better than they are to-day, for they then walked all the way to Scutari. A French company lately brought over an automobile to carry passengers out to Platana, a pretty neighbour on the west, but the wheels gave out at the second attempt, and at the time of my visit the car was wanting a buyer at scrap prices.

Trebizond is a large and not unpicturesque city, built about deep ravines, round which the old walls are still in a fair state of preservation. The gardens in August were bright with scented blossoms and ripe fruit. The bazaars are crowded, but not remarkable for any native wares of interest beyond a little rather primitive filigree work. The most agreeable resort is a large and shady garden in the town, where the visitor can procure bad coffee or a good ice. The natives, though wild in appearance, are the soul of courtesy to strangers. One venerable old Laze, with a patriarchal beard, seeing that I stood

spellbound in admiration before a great tree which was bowed over the wall of his garden under its burden of magnificent white blossom, left his cronies with whom he had been drinking coffee, and, pulling down a low branch, plucked three glorious blooms, and handed them to me with the air of a hidalgo making me free of his house.

The enforced idleness of that Friday night had a demoralising effect on our own crew and on those of two *Paquet* steamers anchored close to us. It seems that the *Paquet* men had gone back to their work before the famous strike at Marseilles was settled, in consequence of which the *Messageries* men jeered at them through the darkness, with a pleasing chorus of "*Re-né-gats! Re-né-gats!*" There ensued an entertaining exchange of sentiments, for the *renégats* replied with some private information about the strikers' mothers. This conversation lasted for a couple of hours, during which the crews clung to the rigging and gibbered like angry monkeys looking across a river.

On the Saturday night, it being but a short run to the frontier, we slept in Russian waters, and, by way of reminder that we were already in the grip of the Bear, the steward collected all passports for police inspection next morning.

As our morose Turkish neighbour had got aboard the outgoing *Paquet* at daybreak, they would find everything in order, though our only Prince had half a dozen passports, one as a Colonel, another as a tourist, a third as a student. He was much exercised as to which it would be best to show.

In the grey of the morning, with the Caucasus looming serenely through the mist that wrapped the shore, the *Sidon* ran into Batoum, our first haven since leaving the Golden Horn, and something to give thanks for after a week of open roads. I had for some time been watching an immense shoal of porpoises just outside the harbour. The sea must have been black with them for, I should think, fifty acres. Then, with one accord, they put themselves in motion and escorted the steamer to the port. There followed two weary hours of silly formalities with the port doctor and Customs officers. The doctor, a fussy little gentleman, with white hair, gold spectacles, and figure-of-six nose, treated us to none of the juggling with clinical thermometers and turning up of eyelids with which America strives to exclude all but the perfect from the boon of its citizenship; and the sleuthhounds of the Customs also got through their business quickly, a despatch which I attributed to the distraction of a side

table spread with table wine and other refreshment for their benefit. Yet, having rummaged swiftly among our clothing and affixed their seals, they were in duty bound to uphold their reputation for senseless restrictions by some arbitrary act or other, so they selected an unoffending kitbag of mine, which they had examined, and, in spite of the fact that I was returning in the same cabin at the end of the week, and that during the ship's stay in port they had their sentries posted on board, they flatly refused to allow me to leave it in the ship. I asked their officer, a personage in braided uniform, whether, even in that heat, undutiable effects were suspected of breeding contraband, and received a reply in his barbarous tongue which was probably witty, but which no one translated for my benefit. Then, as soon as my passport had been smelt by several officials, I was requested to leave the ship forthwith. Having decided to catch the afternoon train to Tiflis, my indignation at such peremptory dismissal was more feigned than real, but I did find time to marvel that *ententes* with civilised nations should not have taught these people civilised ideas. And I wondered, too, at the pronouncement of Buckle. Never, even in the days of Hamid, had the Turks exercised stricter surveillance of their visitors than this.

The petroleum trade of Batoum is at its last gasp, and the port recalls Hawthorne's famous description of Salem. The place still smells of petrol, and they say that the taste of it is in the fish caught for miles round. That is all. The Revolution was its ruin. Fifteen thousand workmen, their minds poisoned by agitators, went on strike and asked for the moon. They did not get the moon. What they did get was the shutting down of the works and starvation for themselves and their families. There are strikes and strikes, but it was demonstrated to my satisfaction that in this instance the demands were so extortionate that the Rothschilds had no alternative but to close their gates. The result was deplorable. Time was when the port was so overcrowded with tankers bound for the Canal that the mail-boats had commonly to anchor outside for want of a berth. On this occasion, I saw a single tanker lying idle alongside the quay, and there was not another steamer in the harbour. The thousands who were thrown out of work by the strike hung for a time about the streets of Batoum. When their presence began to be a nuisance to their neighbours, the Russian Government tried the efficacy of setting a thief to catch a thief. In other words, it enrolled three hundred Lazes as city police, and with complete success, as these

reformed rakes so terrorised their countrymen that the strikers dispersed to the hills, where they have since been busy hatching dark plots against the Cossack. They are not wholly to be ignored, and the Russians know that one of these days the Caucasus will blaze with revolt from one end to the other. Millions of cartridges are walking about the streets of Batoum and Tiflis in the pockets of Georgians and Armenians. Nor, in view of past relations, and of the policy adopted by Russia in the recent affairs of Persia, would it be strange if the hand of Turkey were to fire the train. The insensate disregard of Turkish interests in a land with which her ill-defined frontier marches from Armenia to the Persian Gulf, is a Russian attitude to which England has lent her moral support for reasons which need not be discussed here. The outcome will inevitably be Turkey's support of the next revolt of the Caucasus. The memory of Schamyl lives in the hearts of a million desperadoes, and even if Russia should again succeed in suppressing the outbreak, it will cripple her resources woefully.

Batoum has at any rate one decent house of refreshment, the Hotel de France; and here I lunched on an admirable mayonnaise of sturgeon, with a bottle of amber wine of the Caucasus, a clean, full-bodied vintage, very palatable in that

A GEORGIAN.

The Georgians, the original inhabitants of the Caucasus, are of very ancient stock. They are a brave and handsome race, as may be seen from the splendid type in the picture. This is the native dress, with the biretta and bandolier, the latter nowadays a mere picturesque adjunct, but formerly used for powder-flasks or cartridges.

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climate, but not, I imagine, suitable for export. It has also two conspicuous places of worship, a Greek cathedral and a Latin church of equal pretensions. As it was a Sunday morning, I spent a few minutes in the Greek building, and carried away a confused impression of dazzling gold vestments, obscured by clouds of incense, and of devout peasants kissing ikons and buying loaves and candles at a counter just inside the porch. The heat was intolerable, and, as the Orthodox seek salvation without seats, a little went a long way. Then I found peace in the pleasant public garden which runs parallel with the beach, being compelled to wait for the passing of a regiment of Cossacks, who marched to their barracks singing a barbarous hymn. Even such music, I suppose, has charms to soothe those savage breasts, and if howling dirges on the march heartens the poor wretches to bear that dog's life of theirs with greater equanimity, I am glad it is permitted by the regulations of their service.

If Batoum has little business, it seems to have less recreation. The only sign of merriment was among some hundreds who were bathing from the sloping beach. Here, in their company, I had an enjoyable swim, as the surf was breaking, not too violently, on the shingle, and the water

was deep close inshore. Mixed bathing is not permitted, for the excellent reason that the Russian ladies bathe without costume of any sort, lying about on the beach like basking seals. In consequence, they are accommodated with machines a couple of hundred yards away from those of the men, and all approaches to the scene of their simple frolic are barred by armed Laze policemen. These are apt to rise suddenly in the path of the unwary, as they usually have their backs turned to the garden, and are absorbed in the arduous task of watching to see that none of the ladies drown.

The train leaves for Tiflis in the afternoon at 5.25, and I rarely turned my back on a strange town after so short an acquaintance or with less of regret. Arrived at the station after my ample lunch, I thought there were visions about, for surely each clock had two pairs of hands, one black and the other red, marking two different times, with an hour or more between. I rubbed my eyes and looked again, but the four hands were still on each dial. Then I cast about for some porter who could explain the discrepancy, and with some difficulty I found a man in the luggage hall who knew enough German to ask for beer. He contrived to make me understand that the earlier hour was Petersburg time.

Fortunately, my train left by local time, and I had only just leisure to get my ticket and to lay in some simple provision for the night. The journey lasts fourteen hours, and there is no dining-car on the train, so that the precaution was not superfluous. The single first-class fare to Tiflis is a little under thirty shillings. I intended returning second-class, so as to compare the two; and I may here add that they are equally uncomfortable, the second-class carriages being, if anything, cooler. An absent-minded lady sells the tickets at a booking-office guarded by a Cossack with a fixed bayonet. This makes things cheerful. By the time I had explained my wants, with pencil and paper, at the head of some forty people, who looked murder, the Cossack was fingering the trigger action of his gun. The railroad, like everything and everyone else in that country, is under military control, and the ticket inspector goes through the train under the escort of a posse of armed riflemen, which should make things interesting for anyone travelling without a ticket. The carriages are badly ventilated, and insects travel free. The scenery during the first two hours, with the sea on one side and the distant hills on the other, is not without its attractions, but is tame to anyone who has travelled through the Rocky Mountains on the Canadian Pacific, or

over the mountain zigzags of Jamaica. My companion for the night was a portly officer who had not used Odol for his mouth. He showed a playful inclination to put his feet on my side of the carriage, and when, in an interval during which he was gazing out of the corridor window, I presently lay full length along my own side and half closed my eyes, his whiskers bristled like a boar's tusks. Fortunately, he was quite unable to tell me all he thought, so he gave a grunt of disgust and went to sleep. I was reminded of a nasty story which they are fond of telling in those parts by way of illustrating the dread in which the military is held by civilians. It seems that a little tradesman, who had dined too well with the friends who came to see him off, found himself alone in the compartment with a huge officer, who likewise took up most of the carriage and went to sleep. Suddenly the little man, who dared hardly breathe for fear of waking his terrible companion, knew that he was going to be sick, and ere he could reach the corridor he *was* sick with a vengeance, all over the slumbering captain. Wildly he looked around for an avenue of escape, as the other would certainly have killed him if by ill-luck he had waked before the next station was reached. Then happier counsels prevailed, and gently shaking the recipient of his

excess, he said to him, in a voice charged with emotion—

"Oh, my Colonel, what a fright you have given me! Can I do anything for you? Or are you feeling better?"

After a long night of scratching, I woke amid scenery that would have made an Arizona cowboy homesick, with its undulating hills of barren rock and stretches of sand between. Having performed the journey between Tiflis and the coast only at night, I cannot say whether there are Alpine fairylands by the way; but all that I saw in the intervals of daylight at either end was disappointing, in view of what I had been led to expect.

The place to stay at in the capital of the Caucasus is the Hotel de Londres, not on patriotic grounds, since it is kept by a German, but because the traveller can lie in fine linen, and eat dishes prepared by an artist and not by the bottlewashers responsible for most of the cooking in the Near East, with results tempting only to an ostrich in Ramadan.

I will not say that the charges at this hotel are so trifling as to put its guests under any obligation to the management, but they are by no means exorbitant when compared with those charged for similar comforts in America. The price of my bedroom, with a balcony overlooking the gardens,

was five shillings, and the bill is made out in roubles and kopecks, the former equivalent to half a dollar, or 2s. 1d., the latter to one-hundredth of that sum, or one farthing. Why do we not adopt a decimal system of coinage in this civilised country of ours? Truly in this, at any rate, these barbarians shame us. It looked at first sight as if there might be some extras, for a notice posted in the room set forth the following items :—

Supplementary Bed	50	kopecks.
Towel	05	„
Pillow and Cover	25	„
Sheet	25	„
Candle	20	„
Soap	50	„
Samovar	20	„

I eyed the list ruefully, under the impression that my five shillings only gave me the use of three walls and a balcony. I could do without the second bed, I had my own soap, and I do not drink hot tea on July nights. Yet the other articles were indispensable, and I was glad to find that these were charged for only if duplicated. The meals, served *à la carte*, were simply excellent, and with each I had a bottle of *Wazikoff*, or other native wine, with ice and a dash of the local mineral waters. Mighty hunters have rested at the Hotel de Londres before and

after arduous climbs after chamois or argali, and the German lady who presides over the bar never tired of talking about Prince Demidoff, Mr. Littledale, and others whom I had last seen amid very different scenes.

Perhaps it is superfluous to mention that, within ten minutes of my arrival, Paul Pry had another look at my passport. He looked at it again at Batoum before I was allowed to leave the country; and the one redeeming feature of an interest in his movements, which might otherwise be even more irritating to the traveller, is that it costs him nothing. In Turkey, on the other hand, every time a passport or *teskeré* is retained at the Customs, it has to be recovered at a cost of several francs.

It has been said, no doubt with truth, that no fewer than seventy dialects are spoken in the streets of Tiflis, but the languages of western Europe are little understood there. In modern fiction by Max Pemberton or Le Queux, all Russians of the better class are accomplished linguists, but in real life few of them speak any language but their own, and that, goodness knows, ought to be enough for one lifetime. Even the hall porter at the Hotel de Londres understands no French, English, or German, and the only individual attached to the establishment

TIFLIS, CAPITAL OF THE CAUCASUS.

One of the most remarkable cities of Western Asia, a Russian provincial capital grafted on an ancient city of the Georgians. It is said that no fewer than seventy dialects are spoken in its streets, and the population consists of the indigenous Georgians, with large colonies of Tartars and Armenians and the Russian official element. The building on the hill in the photograph is the prison. It is usually full.

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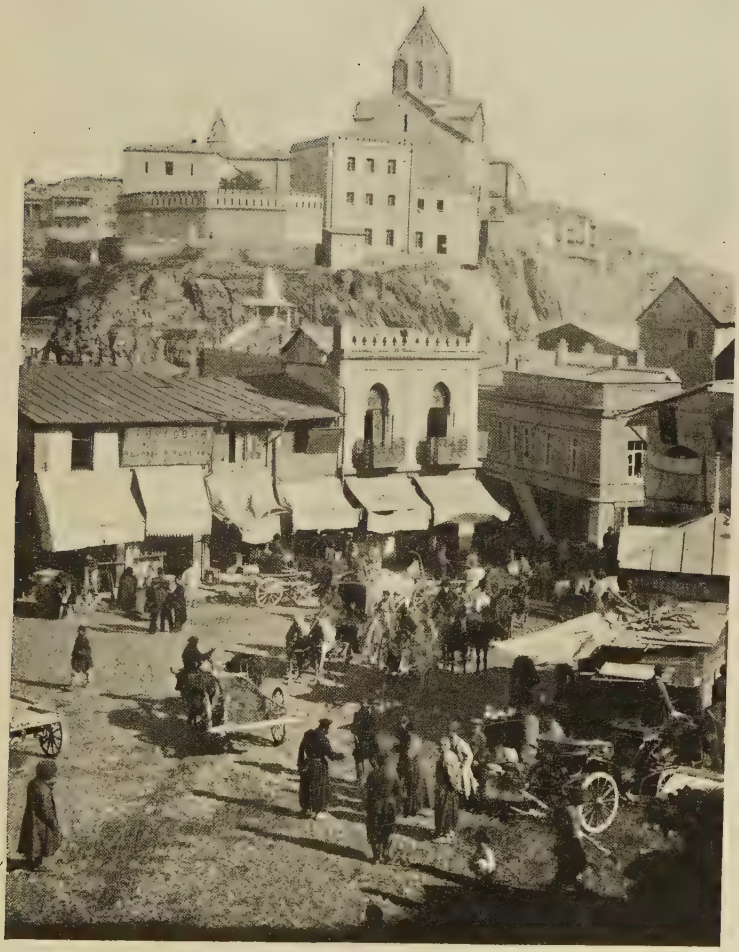

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past three centuries. I wonder if I shall be believed when I say that, at any rate down to the time of my visit, Russia had not permitted the appointment of a British Consul at Tiflis, as a result of which English affairs were entrusted to the *Consul for Austria.* Inquiry at the Foreign Office elicited the reply that there was no demand for an English Consul at Tiflis. It was considered all-sufficient to maintain one at Batoum and another at Baku, the Caspian terminus of the railroad. I wonder, too, how Holy Russia, laughing in her sleeve, views this straightforward supply-and-demand system of appointing consular officials. What of her own Consul-General at Damascus, with probably not one single Russian living in that city? Is it parsimony or idiocy that prevents our looking ahead and at once installing a Consul of our own in a city of over a hundred thousand inhabitants, lying on the high road between Persia and the Mediterranean? Wake up, England!

Although it has centuries of history behind it, Tiflis looks, with the red-and-green roofs of its modern quarter, not unlike a mushroom American mining city. Such, at least, is the impression one gets of it from the summit of the Funicular Railway, a favourite resort on hot summer evenings, since it affords a cooling breeze when there is

not a breath of air in the city itself. Closer investigation reveals the Tartar Quarter, a seething hive of savagery, where natives and Cossacks are in endless collision. The city lies on both banks of the swift and muddy Kura, and is noted for its gardens. One of these gardens is opposite the hotel, and at the gate of it is a little chapel, which moves the Orthodox to genuflections. It was just here, one evening, that I watched a gigantic Cossack belabouring two louts who had been sparring in presence of a small crowd. He held the bigger of the combatants down by one ear and pommelled him handsomely. There is another garden in which a military band plays badly once a day, and just outside the town there is the Botanic Garden, of which the natives are pathetically proud. Shades of the First Gardener! This is no Eden. I recalled such Botanic Gardens as I knew elsewhere: Kew, Sydney, Buitenzoorg; but this crude collection of young trees and rough benches in a dreary gorge is the merest commonplace of a landscape garden in a summer climate suggestive of the Sahara. There is a fine Municipal Museum, with valuable collections of Persian carpets and other handiwork of the bazaars, and a varied stock of trophies from the hunting-grounds of the Caucasus. It would not be fair to describe the condition of the

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A COSSACK.

The Cossacks are superb horsemen, and of their bravery there can be no question. Unfortunately, they forfeit much of the visitor's admiration by their brutal methods of keeping order among the subject population, though the crowd in the Tartar Quarter of Tiflis is obviously made up of turbulent elements.

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latter, as I saw the Museum, by courtesy of the Director, at a moment when the building was closed to the public, and the contents were in confusion, pending removal to other premises.

Among the chief institutions of Tiflis are its hot sulphur baths, and of them perhaps that kept by Orbeliani is the best known. They are all situated in the Tartar Quarter, and thither I drove early one morning in one of the cheap and excellent two-horse cabs, which are well sprung and fitted with rubber tyres. The drivers, who wear hats of curious flattened pattern, are often cruel to their animals, but civil fellows otherwise, and the official tariff includes fares as low as 7½d. In some of the local carriages, three, or even four, horses are driven abreast. Even at that early hour the streets were full of bullock-waggons, and Cossacks were to be seen everywhere, some on foot, others riding as if they were part of their horses. All through the wild Tartar quarter these men, carrying the majesty of Russia in their belts, keep order among a crowd that quarrels in seventy languages, but only by the free use of the butt-end of their rifles.

The hot sulphur springs come welling through the earth with an aroma that suggests isothermal lines between Tiflis and Tophet. Arrived at the entrance, the visitor orders a *banchik*, or masseur,

and then descends a stairway to the undressing room. Either this was an unfashionable hour, or else Tiflis puts cleanliness a long way after godliness, for I had the whole establishment to myself. Having disrobed, I found my way into an adjoining bathroom, and sat in the hot and smelly water that was bubbling into a stone bath in one corner. To me, seated in the hot bath, enter R. (as Sir A. Pinero would put it), a lean, light (thank God he *was* light) Persian, with less clothing than would gag a baby. With a profound salaam, he conducts me to a marble slab. On this he lays me out, face downwards; then, without a word of warning (I should not have understood it in any case), he springs nimbly on my back, planting his long, bare feet between my shoulders, and treading on me as if I were so much linen from the washtub. Then he turns me over on my back and does another *pas seul* on my chest. This accomplished to his entire satisfaction, he next dashes very hot water over me, and the final rite is performed with the aid of a small muslin bag, which looks empty, but which, containing some secret preparation of soap, swells like a football every time it is dipped in the bath. From this inexhaustible bag my *banchik* shook over me such showers of bubbles that I must have suggested a gigantic cuckoo-

A RUSSIAN BATH, TIFLIS.

Here is one of the stages in the famous hot baths, which usually surprises the visitor unprepared for it. The lean Persian bathman suddenly leaps on his back and kneads his muscles with the soles of his feet. Then he shakes soap bubbles over him out of a small muslin bag. These natural sulphur springs have been famous for centuries.

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spit. Unfortunately, I opened my eyes too soon, and after a fleeting impression of hundreds of little iridiscent *banchiks* dancing through the bubbles, the soap got in my eyes and I staggered to the shower-bath, which ended the proceedings. The Russian, or Persian, bath is followed by no prolonged *kief*, with coffee and tobacco, as in Turkey, and, having given the *banchik* a rouble for himself, I quickly dressed and left the building. The man at the entrance juggled with an *eschott* (the calculating-board, which the Chinese call *swanpan*, and without which Asiatics seem unable to make up their minds that two and two make four), as a result of which I was charged for overtime. The whole cost of the bath, including cab both ways, was three half-crowns. I have been jumped on for less, but those who will be clean in Asiatic Russia must be prepared to back their fancy.

The shops in the Tartar Quarter are quaint, particularly those in which wine of the country is sold, literally, by the bullockful, a generous measure that would have warmed the heart of Falstaff and his knaves in an age when full-blooded men did not drink hot water with their meals. The spectacle of a bullock dragging a cart loaded with dead beeves full of wine recalled those posters at home which, with a legend of

"Alas, my poor brother!" advertised a well-known meat extract. There are attractive displays in the shops of the native armourers, whose handiwork has been famous for centuries; but the shops that the visitor is likely to remember longest are the hatters. Here he can see them making and selling the rough sheepskin caps, which, with the natural grease left in the wool, must be comforting in winter but an unspeakable burden in the hot weather. Tiflis was the hottest city of my tour. Even Damascus would not, I imagine, be as sultry in August, for the capital of the Caucasus is buried in its hills, and its river, unlike the voluminous Barada, is the merest drain at that season. So dry is the atmosphere that my throat was parched the whole time I was there. Yet these ponderous caps are cheerfully worn by the Georgian dandies, who swagger through the streets in their claret-coloured ulsters, top-boots, and an elaborate belt, or sash, with silver bottles, a survival from the days when they carried powder-flasks. They are a handsome type of men and fierce fighters, but they also know how to make merry on occasion. Their marriage feasts entail a week of continuous feasting, day and night, and a friend whom I met in the country gave me an amusing account of one of these celebrations, during which the

BULLOCK-SKINS OF WINE, TIFLIS.

The pungent, though not unpleasing, wines of the Caucasus are commonly stored in skins, and such a load is a common sight in the streets of Tiflis or Batoum.

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bride's family kept open house. On that occasion the old parish priest was overcome by his libations at a very early stage of the proceedings, and some of the more serious members of the company, reluctant to see him made game of by the irreverent, took him home in a cab, after which they returned to the revellers, with comforting assurance that "now there were no children about, they could enjoy themselves!" I also made the acquaintance of a well-known Georgian poet and patriot, Prince Akaki Zereteli, a mild old gentleman, and, as I learnt to my cost, equal to playing an uncommonly good game of chess. He looked very different from the ordinary conception of a revolutionary, but I have been told that he sends fiery messages of encouragement to his oppressed countrymen. He travelled back with us to Constantinople, and kindly wrote some verses on our menu cards at the Captain's table, I believe in praise of liberty. Unfortunately, the strange characters have no meaning for me, and I carelessly omitted to ask for the translation.

The Georgians have been ousted from most lucrative trades by the Armenians, who have invaded the land in their thousands, and who now and then furnish a little pleasant excitement by throwing bombs at the banks. I had an

opportunity of comparing the types on the return journey to Batoum, for one of my fellow-passengers in the second class was a festive young Georgian, and the other a little beady-eyed Armenian. The Georgian entered into conversation on the strength of half a dozen words of French and as many of German, and both languages were exhausted by the time he had told me his nationality and inquired after mine. Yet he was ingenious. By tapping a copper coin, pointing to the hills, and making a gesture well known throughout the East as denoting abundance, he gave me to understand that there were copper mines in that direction. Then, plunging more wildly, he gesticulated so violently that the little Armenian laughed outright, till the other turned on him quite unexpectedly and seemed to tell him to go to a spot below Van.

At length the *Sidon* had taken in all the eggs that Batoum could spare, and, with a little final mischief-making on the part of the Customs officers, who, needless to say, examined our passports once more before letting us go, she was graciously permitted to steam out of Russian waters. The way back to Constantinople lay over the old track, with one or two extra ports in the itinerary — Ordu, Fatsa,

Unieh, and Ineboli — at each of which she received great tribute of eggs. At the last-named, perhaps the most picturesque of them all, I was shown the questionable remains of a Byzantine breakwater, which centuries of storms have rendered quite unfit for its original purpose.

It was with genuine regret that I took leave of the *Sidon* and her Commandant, for it had been a most attractive trip, free from the disagreeables so often attendant on sea travel. Indeed, the parting brought with it the unwelcome reminder that ere another week had gone, it would be good-bye to Turkey altogether.

CHAPTER VII

THE CITY OF LIBERTY

European Appearance of Salonika—Cradle of Liberty and Tomb of Tyranny—Its Surroundings—Headquarters of Conspiracy—Its Antiquity—Paul to the Thessalonians—The Spanish Jews—The Villa Allatini—Policy of Keeping Abd-ul-Hamid in Confinement—His Last Selamlik—Farewell to Turkey—Character of the Turk—Hope for the Future.

SALONIKA is the pride of the Young Turks. It is by no means the type of city dear to the heart of the Old Turk. It is European in appearance, and most of its citizens are either Jews, descended from those whom Ferdinand and Isabella drove forth from Spain, or Levantine Greeks and the varied demi-semi European riffraff that helps to people ports at the eastern end of the Mediterranean.

It is not for its beauty or resources, or even because it is the third seaport of the Empire, that Young Turkey loves its Salonika. It is because it has long been regarded as the cradle of liberty, and has more recently been selected as the tomb of tyranny; for it is here, of course, that in the Villa Allatini the ex-Sultan

SALONIKA.

The city, where of old dwelt the Thessalonians of St. Paul's time, is now chiefly famous as the place of exile of the deposed Sultan. Its population is largely composed of Spanish Jews, descended from those expelled in the fifteenth century by Ferdinand and Isabella. They speak to this day a curious dialect of their own. On the right of the photograph is seen the White Tower, still used as a prison for petty offenders.

[*Face p.* 262.

Face p. 262.]

Abd-ul-Hamid is spending the sunset of his naughty life. How the malcontents came to choose Salonika as the forcing-house of their schemes is not very evident, but I was assured by one of the few military deputies in the present Turkish Parliament that the suggestion originally came from a British Consul, and it certainly has much to recommend it. For one thing, it lay beyond reach of the long arm which stretched from Yildiz, and was comparatively out of hearing of the Sultan's spies. In spite of this desirable distance from the capital, it was not, as last year's events showed, too remote to frustrate rapid concentration, and, with its constant service of trains and steamers, it made an ideal *rendezvous* for the political doctrinaires whose liberal propaganda found ready acceptance here, thanks in great measure to the high standard of education among the seventy thousand Jews in the place. Ever since the Revolution, even earlier, Salonika has been closely identified with the fight for freedom, and it is not likely to let Turkey forget the obligation. The troops and volunteers who marched on the revolted capital in April were the "Army of Salonika." Adrianople, it is true, received grudging measure of tardy recognition, but it was Salonika first and last, always Salonika.

Considered dispassionately, Salonika is hardly an ideal spot for a man to end his days in, though it might serve to reconcile him to his coming departure from earth. Cicero tasted its delights, and, like Hamid, looked out on the bleak foothills, with one sandheap peeping over the shoulders of the next. The port is well built, and the streets are cleaner than the traveller looks for in the Levant. The quays are little inferior to those of Smyrna, and the continual movement of trains, trams, and mail-boats gives a more businesslike appearance than that of most Turkish cities. Yet, for all its modern enterprise, Salonika boasts a respectable antiquity, as symbolised in its triumphal arch and other ruins. This is, of course, that city of the Thessalonians to whom Paul wrote letters, so that, even in those days, Salonika had its busybodies working not at all. Yet the population is very different from what it was in Paul's day. Of its first owners, Byzantine Greeks, few are left. They were outnumbered by the Turks, who came out of the East, and these in turn were swept aside by the Jews, who came out of the West, bringing with them a strange Spanish-Hebrew dialect, in which they converse to this day. To-day, indeed, the Turkish rule is nominal, for the City Fathers are Jews; but

this must once have been a fanatical Moslem stronghold, for the minarets which stand silhouetted against the desolate background are as numerous as church steeples in a Suffolk landscape. But the Turks keep themselves to themselves nowadays at the back of the town, and let the Devil pipe to his own down by the sea front.

In the suburbs there are a number of well-kept villas, easily reached by the tram, and the most interesting, it goes without saying, is that in which Abd-ul-Hamid is interned. It is a somewhat pretentious mansion of no beauty, originally built by an Italian miller. It stands in an obviously new plantation of young trees, and is further surrounded by a high wall, round which sentries are posted at intervals, as the house is so close to the shore that a rescue has to be carefully guarded against. The ex-Sultan occupies a suite, I believe, on the first floor. A resident pointed out some windows behind which he was supposed to be in durance, though his gaolers would guard the secret of his whereabouts even if he had escaped to hell or Berlin. They have need to look after their treasure pretty closely, for he is as full of tricks as Handcuff Houdini. Only a week before my visit, the guard had been disturbed by a *fracas*

in the royal apartments. It seems that one of the dozen ladies assigned to him in his retirement screamed for help, and was found in violent altercation with the ex-Sultan, who, she said, had threatened her life. Piteously she prayed to return to her own people at Constantinople, and it was only the suspicious haste with which she packed her belongings that prompted the officer of the guard to have the lady searched, with the result that her clothing was found stuffed with letters from the illustrious captive to his friends outside. In other words, the whole affair was what in less distinguished circles would be called a put-up job!

The ultimate fate of Abd-ul-Hamid is a matter of slight importance to history. To all intents and purposes he ceased to exist within a few hours of when I saw him at his last Selamlik in April. So long as he sat on the throne, there was always the fear of reaction in favour of his sacred person, but his mantle has fallen on other shoulders. But for the resentment of the Courts of Europe in cases of regicide, and but for the hope of laying hands on the whole of his treasure, he would probably have suffered long ago the fate which he decreed for Midhat, for he cannot cost the nation much less than a thousand pounds a month, and there would be

few to regret his death. At any rate, the Committee does well to keep him under lock and key, for he is a very prince of intriguers, and his resources are amazing. He seems to corrupt the seemingly incorruptible by hypnotic suggestion. Even when he was closely watched at Yildiz, he found means to distribute gold among the murderers of Adana and the mutineers of Stamboul. I have been told by those who knew him that, without its gilt edge, his personal magnetism does not amount to much, but in any case he is best shut up and out of mischief. Nor will it surprise me if he has gone the way of the flesh before these lines are in print. It was with strange sensations that I looked at that open window, behind which the fallen tyrant was supposed to be sitting while his women told his fortune with cards. I remembered the words of Omar—

> "How Sultan after Sultan, with his Pomp,
> Abode his destined Hour and went his Way."

I recalled him amid all the panoply of the Selamlik, when ten thousand held their breath while the open carriage rolled by with the little old man on the piled-up cushions. I remembered him as he sat facing Kiamil on the day before Kiamil fell from power. I remembered

him at that other Selamlik in April, when, though he must have known that it would be the last of his reign, and perhaps of his life, he looked contemptuously at the crowd, and seemed so indifferent to the rumours of an attempt on his person that some of us wrote him down a braver man than history had given him credit for. Alas! Next day the cannon thundered against the barracks held by a faithful remnant of his ignorant "children," and the hiss of bullets stabbed the morning air in the streets of Pera. Three days later came that pitiful scene at Yildiz, when he, who had cheerfully sent thousands of unarmed Armenians to their doom, pleaded for his life to an Armenian and a Jew —the irony of it!—like some yokel threatened with the horsewhip. Thus he showed, for the last time, that the popular verdict on his cowardice had not erred.

. . . . . .

As I stepped off the quay at Salonika, to be rowed back to the *Memphis* by burly Hebrew boatmen, I uncovered in regretful farewell to Turkey. I had come to love the land and like the people. The Turk has his faults. What nation has not? He is intolerant, and, like most intolerant folk, ignorant as well. He is sensual and he is lazy, passing much time, that

[*Face p.* 269.

JEWISH *HAMALS*, SALONIKA.

Even the watermen and street porters of Salonika are Jews, no less brawny than the Kurds and Armenians who perform such work elsewhere in Ottoman dominions. They are apparently indulging in a game of cards, of which, not being bound by the Koranic injunction against games of chance, they are particularly fond.

[*Face p.* 269.

might better be devoted to his own improvement and to the regeneration of his country, in drinking coffee, loitering in the perfumed gloom of the harem, or fiddling with the beads of the *tesbeh*, on which he recites the ninety-nine attributes of Allah. But he is a gentleman, loyal as a friend, and not too bitter as an enemy. Even his obtuseness, which cannot always be ignored, contrasts agreeably with the superhuman cunning of some of his neighbours. It will, no doubt, take time to remove that fierce elemental Mohammedanism which despises the Giaour and regards everything outside the pale of Islam as damned, but there are already many enlightened men in the land who regret it. There is evident on all sides an honest desire to sweep aside the barriers, not excepting the domestic slavery of Turkish women, which must be the first condition of bringing Turkey in line with civilised nations. Once, however, these changes are accomplished, not too quickly, but with the approval of all that is best in the nation, there is no reason whatever why the Sick Man should not become whole. Recent events have surely shown anyone who considers them without bias, that Turkey's convalescence is not past praying for.

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